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A GOING CONCERN

Some Notes on Britain

by EDWARD WEEKS

LONDON may be in the hands of an American Army of Occupation, as one wag put it, but the lions of Trafalgar still gaze upon a going concern. It was seven in the evening when I first reached the city, and thanks to Double Summer Time the streets were bathed in the sunny July haze.

The eye is immediately captured by the never-still pattern of uniforms. Against the limestone façades you see the khaki with its bright shoulder tabs, the RAF slate blue, the bearded young naval officers (the Navy sports the beard as a badge of long cruises), the mulberry berets of the air-borne troops and the black of the Eighth Army. As you look closer, you begin to pick out the Poles with their angular hats, the Fighting French, the Norwegians, and to spot the American aviators, whose blue patches worn beneath the silver wings identify boys who have come straight from combat.

London traffic, which used to crawl, is now a fast thin stream into which an American steps, always looking the wrong way. The red buses, dispatch riders, the taxis and staff cars, bear down on you at an alarming speed. London has a quick pulse today.

It is not only natural attraction which makes you

look at the English women. It is the fact that they have taken over so large a part of this man-made civilization. The harbor launch which came out to meet our seaplane was manned by women in blue jerseys and slacks. From the boat train which rode us up to London I saw women working in the train sheds and platforms of every station: they were oiling and servicing engines, the broader of them were unloading baggage cars, and as porters they are ready to help you with your handbags. But I noticed that the women porters took care of the mothers and children: the men didn't want them, and there is a matter of pride in that.

When we lined up in the taxi queue at Liverpool Street, it was a policewoman who sorted us into the proper cabs — for Waterloo, the Strand, or Westminster. Curiously enough, I saw no women driving taxis: perhaps that is one English club they can't get into. But I did see them driving lorries, and as ticket takers they are in charge of all buses throughout the kingdom. The speediest of them are the women dispatch riders for the Admiralty in their crash helmets and blue uniforms, a sight for the eye as they slice through the London traffic at 50 m.p.h.

The night of our arrival in the after-dinner dusk we walked along the Embankment for a look at the captive balloons which rise like thousands of gray elephants above the gray city. Half of every crew are women. Women aim and service many of the

Early in July EDWARD WEEKS, the editor of the *Atlantic*, flew to Britain as a guest of the British Ministry of Information. These impressions, culled in his travel, were set down directly after his return the last week in August.

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ack-ack batteries, though it is still the masculine privilege to fire the gun. Women are the rank and file of the Land Army, they are nurses, ferry pilots, WVS, ATS, WRENS — and they compose from a third to nine tenths of the working population of the factories.

Britain has mastered a problem which still bewilders us — the problem of how to employ women on a part-time schedule. Some of them work on split schedules, four hours a day, four or five days a week. Women in the little villages are organized in groups of twenty to fifty fabricating a single gadget which when finished will be supplied to the larger assembly line. Such part-time work answers an age-old craving of women whose children have left the apron strings.

In the big munition and aircraft factories, women are manning three shifts of eight hours each. In one munitions plant in the North, of 12,000 employees, 800 were men, and of that 800 most were crocks and old-timers who had been brought back to do the lower work the women were too skilled to handle. All of this in a country whose birth rate has shown a healthy though not always legitimate pickup.

In one particular factory I asked which age group was doing the most remarkable work. It was not, as I thought, the girls twenty to twenty-five whose husbands and fiancés were in service; it was the group from forty to sixty, most of whom did not know one end of a wrench from another five years ago. The application of this woman power is not hit-or-miss. It is conscripted, graded, and regulated. The drafting of women from forty-five to fifty was brought before Parliament during my visit. While there were scattered complaints from women who did not want to leave their homes, the majority were quietly making ready for the new job, should they be called.

Factory managers always refer to their "female workers." One wonders how long it will be before female workers exert their proportionate and new-found influence in the shop committees and so reach up to the councils of the Labor Party. And one wonders how many of the women now employed — the women in youth or middle life — will be willing to relinquish at the war's end the freedom and skill which they have earned. Said one married woman reflectively, "Oh, yes, I want to be with my husband and my children on Saturday and Sunday. And I know the housework will make its claim. But I shall never be really happy again without three or four days a week of this." Labor leaders see how sizable is the problem coming up when the men return. Its solution will reach into the factories, into the community, into education,

and into literature. It will be something to watch.

Meantime there is that natural attraction which I spoke about. Women are at their best under the nervous excitement of war. And every woman in Britain knows that the Americans are looking at her. It is no wonder that the American soldier feels more than merely curious about these flaxen blondes with their lovely coloring. Every Englishwoman who can afford to wears bare legs, and the leg make-up — or liquid stockings — adds a tropical touch to the scene. The girls in uniform must be envious, for their regulation cotton hose are not, shall I say, seductive. Nor are the skirts and blouses of the English uniforms so smartly cut as ours.

Or am I really thinking of the figures which set them off? To American eyes Englishwomen seem singularly robin-breasted, the hips broader, the legs more downright. The contrast was brought home to me when two thousand of our own WACS marched into London. "Oh, those lovely long legs," said my companion ruefully as she watched them swing by. Seriously, what does breed the difference between our rangy American figure and the English ruddy cheeks, robin breasts, and big-boned strength? Is it the weather? Or the limestone? Or Brussels sprouts?

2

RESTAURANT food in Britain is not without its dry humor. To begin with, you have to get into the restaurant. The evening of our arrival it was 8.15 before we had bathed and unpacked, and after a disappointing Martini in the American Bar (so called because the alcoholic content is one-half of one per cent) we strolled casually into the regal dining room of the Savoy. An orchestra was playing and most of the tables were occupied. "Have you reservations, sir?" said the headwaiter. "So sorry. May we book you for tomorrow?"

Londoners dine in two shifts and we had been caught between. The first shift come straight in from the office; the second, the couples on leave, after the theaters close at 9.30, and they dine and dance until the midnight curfew — by which time the taxis have expended their gas allowance and electric torches are winking along the Strand and on Piccadilly for a ride home. As Private Breger says, "The young ones flash it on their faces; the old ones on their gams."

But we were talking of food. Rough justice ordains that no diner-out shall have more than three courses, and the rule is inflexible from the tip

of Scotland to Land's End; soup or hors d'oeuvres; entree; sweet or savory. Of course with tea. ("Will you have China or India?") Five shillings is the regulation price, but you pay an addition for the trifle or custard, something more for the fiddler, and most of all for the wine, of which England is very short.

Those who want the first (and only) slices of roast beef, which are still trundled under the gleaming covers at Simpson's, must be at their table at 12.30 or at 6.45. Even if you are on time, your portion will not be that full, rubicund slice: it will be thin shavings — a bit of the fat, a bit of the lean, to give you the taste but not the surfeit of England.

Those who come later take pot luck, which may mean jugged hare (I think it sits rather high) or brill, a fish which tastes as it sounds. If you don't like to pick the brills out of your mouth, you can try "rock salmon," which on some menus is a description of dogfish. The English thick soups are superior to ours and particularly in the summer. Except for marinated herring, the hors d'oeuvres are vegetables which have been overcooked and allowed to cool. A good French dressing is as rare as the oil to make it. Fresh-run salmon stays in Scotland (since price control gives no inducement to the angler to send his catch to London).

On two occasions I had to fall back on chicken. Now I have had delicious fowl at the Ivy, but no such luck elsewhere. For these birds are grandmothers, they have laid their ultimate egg, their salad days are behind them, and whether in brown gravy or curry, they return the lean pickings on which they were fed.

A Necco wafer of butter is served with the English war bread. The bread is brown, chewy, and filling, with a crisp crust: it makes "proper toast," and taken with the ever faithful marmalade, it gives the tea hour a real revival. Tea trolleys go through the offices as early as three o'clock and the brew lasts until four-thirty. So braced, the staff can work until seven.

Since my visit coincided with the summer harvest, I had the relish of the fresh peas and beans, the lettuce which is such a rarity, and the wall-grown peaches and grapes sent to me by Nora Wain and her husband from their farm.

Home cooking, at least from the guest's point of view, is infinitely preferable. For one thing, there are the eggs. Every householder keeps chickens: you will find hen oops in the Master's Lodge at Oxford, on a balcony in Soho, or fenced away from the rosebushes in Kent. And the eggs are a treasure, gladly shared. In a home you will be given a taste of the kid or veal which so seldom strays to town.

And the opportunity of avoiding the ubiquitous sprout. My feelings toward the sprout are those of the cartoonist in *Yank*. His illustration showed an American aviator being briefed for his next flight, and his C.O. was saying to him, "Now your mission is to bomb the hell out of these thousand acres of Brussels sprouts."

3

YES, we are tired — deep down," said the harbor master who had been showing me the London docks. "Don't forget you find us at a cheerful moment. For two years we have been living in a tunnel. Now we begin to see the light at the open end — and, my word, it makes a difference."

In curious ways you notice the effect of that long pull in the dark. I walked my way through five pairs of socks and a brand-new pair of shoes. What impressed me was not the desolate spaces from which the plaster and wreckage have been cleared; what impressed me was how London goes on about its business, with a calm acceptance of the ruins.

The railings have been stripped from the parks and squares; the famous turf is pitted with trenches and dug up for truck gardens. But there are still stretches where lovers lie and tiraders in Hyde Park still denounce the government and all its works. The fine houses in the West End have been gouged with HE; their blind windows are covered with oiled cloth. One little shop in Mayfair had had its face freshened with primrose paint, but it stood out with almost dishonorable gayety against the shabby gray. For London has worn no make-up since 1940.

Over the Bank Holiday they held a track meet in front of St. Paul's — three-legged and half-mile races run on the most expensive cinders in the world. I remember a blank wall in Berkeley Square with the fireplace and a flying tatter of drapery to suggest the coziness which once gathered three flights up. I remember the guttered little homes in Bethnal Green, and the west wing of Buckingham Palace where the bomb hit and where the fragments of carving and masonry now stand in the yard awaiting the day of restoration. Time waits. The clocks in the steeples have stopped at different times, and you wonder what the blitz was like at that particular minute. One had its face blown upside down, the hands gesticulating that in the old sense time doesn't matter.

You do not measure fatigue by destruction but by the recuperative power that remains. Having made up their minds to gamble everything, these people are unashamed of their shabbiness and un-

sentimental about their ruins. They conduct no tours of the bombed areas, no sale of souvenirs. They do not romanticize the war in films as we do. The original sound effects are much too close.

Twenty German bombers swung in low over the Southeast one night during my visit; before breakfast two thousand people were looking for new homes. Farther north in Hull I watched the children in the street playing blocks with bricks from the ruined houses; I saw double-decker buses on their nightly evacuation of some fourteen hundred mothers, children, and ancients. These people have two homes. I followed them from their bombed dockside area — where they spend their days — to the shelters miles out of town. Here school is taught, the old men work on their gardens, and the twelve-year-olds dance the Lambeth Walk and the Hokey-Pokey before going to their bunks.

On my walks I could not help staring at the little oases of life which continue to flourish in the midst of the ruined streets. The miracle of those houses which survive stops you in your tracks. I remember one house in Birmingham, with its little window box, lace curtains, and tiny garden plot — the only home still alive in a row of twenty. In front of it a nine-year-old was precariously balanced on his father's bicycle; and as I passed, his mother came noisily to the door. "Albert, you bring that bicycle in. You'll be smashing it first thing you know. — Kids do take watching!" she said to me briskly. Call it tenacity or call it lack of imagination — but remember that it does not break.

The British children are pink and full of bounce. I could find no trace of the shock to which so many of them have been exposed. The farther I traveled, the more I wondered whether these city dwellers who have followed their factories into the country may not be better off for the sunlight and good food. Generally speaking, the British are thinner and healthier than they were five years ago. Instead of fish and chips, the fried stuff so dear to the Cockney, they have been living on soups, boiled foods — and health bread. The result is noticeable.

4

BRITISH patience is enough to drive an American crazy. I had to be taught how to behave in a queue. In London when you wait for a bus, you stand under a little roof in a queue which runs along the curb and then doubles back on itself. There you stand in pairs, like the animals for the Ark, waiting it may be for an hour or more until your turn comes to step aboard. And when it comes,

don't crowd around the opening and shove, or you will be called back into line — as I was.

The queue for railroad tickets moves twice as fast as our line-up in America, chiefly because everyone is content with a Third Class ticket. The queues for food move faster than ours because there are fewer things to buy. Twenty-six theaters in London are packed, and for a lively number like *The Merry Widow* the queue for the balcony seats forms three hours before the curtain rises, the line being supplied with campstools to sit on.

Britain takes this waiting philosophically: you hear the story of two men who join a prodigiously long line. The short one asks, "Do you know what this is for?" "Not I," answers the stranger ahead, "but it must be something jolly good — see how long the line is!"

In the munitions towns I have seen workers — seventy to eighty pairs — at the end of a ten-hour day, mute in the rain, waiting not for the next bus, but for the one after the next — or the one after that.

Rubber will stretch just so far. What stranger can test the fiber of British resilience? Who can measure the feelings of the miners and sons of miners called back from shipyards and factories because more coal is needed? Above ground they have been earning an average of £7 a week; now they are being ordered underground where the pay might average £5. Four thousand such cases were reviewed in the Regional Labor Office at Edinburgh when I was there. Half of these miners had appealed, and when the appeals were overruled, had gone down to the pits. Only one man was obstreperous.

These are not docile people; if they submit to regulation with less exasperation than we do, it is because they live in the face of greater peril. I walked in the beech forests, past the ammunition dumps hidden under the great trees, saw the machine-gun nests commanding the sunken lane and crossroads, the iron stakes to fend the Luftwaffe off the village common and golf course, the signs, "KEEP OUT. THIS AREA IS MINED." — the visible evidence of a nightmare that was almost true. Now the invasion points the other way, and if the Home Guard grumbles against the same punishing maneuvers on Sunday, well, you can't blame human nature for wanting a holiday.

Naturally, there is more exasperation here than meets the eye. Absentees from the Sunday drill are fined on the second offense. Absentees from factories are fined up to £10 and their names and fines are published in the morning paper. No nerve center in the kingdom is more important than Liverpool, and when the Liverpool dock workers

strike, it is serious. Strike they did — but the whole thing was settled in under forty hours. Human friction of this kind is inevitable when resilience wears thin.

The whole country took time off this August, and as I traveled through Scotland and along the Yorkshire coast, I talked with workers and their youngsters, bound for the beaches. "It is a bit of a scandal," a Labor M.P. said to me, "our taking these ten days. But after all, *it is* the first vacation we have had since the summer of 1939."

What amazes you is that they have kept going at such a pace for four years. At office, dockside, or factory, these men and women have been doing one full-time job of ten hours and then coming home to do a half-time job for the community. In a town as exposed as Hull, some seven thousand people in addition to the police are on call every night.

I asked my English friends how much sleep they were living on and the answer was usually six hours or less. With this ration on a seven-day week, do you wonder that factory managers and shop stewards, laboratory workers and government officials, — all men who carry the burden of detail, — are gray-faced. "Tired — deep down." The words point up the difference between their strain and ours, a difference that must be remembered as we work things out.

5

TO KEEP her spirits up, Britain has had to whistle in the dark. If you have any talent whatever for whistling, you are called upon. In Coventry I met the vaudeville team who were putting on a show at the lunch hour in the cafeteria of a factory. Their humor was broad, and when the two thousand voices roared into the chorus, the singing was better. The National Gallery, having hidden its treasures, now devotes its largest hall to a noon concert free for all Londoners. So does the Royal Exchange. It was Myra Hess who organized the series in the National Gallery — take your lunch, sit on a mat, and don't leave crumbs behind. I was one of the 2500 who heard her play at the thousandth concert this July.

London is full of exhibitions — exhibitions of Soviet art, pictures drawn by British prisoners of war, and in the Gallery itself a superb collection by the commissioned artists with the armed forces. But the biggest magnet in all London is the "fifty-year plan" of the London County Council for the rebuilding of the city. I cannot tell you how many thousands pour across Westminster Bridge each day to see in the County Hall these thirty-foot wall

maps and dramatic graphs of the London that might be. They came from every quarter of the city itself, and they were fascinated by the prospect. I was particularly touched by the ARPS in uniform who studied the maps as if calculating how much safer this new city would be to defend.

This urge to rebuild is blazoned on every city wall in Britain. Even Edinburgh, unbombed and by all odds the most beautiful single spot on the islands, has a huge sign, "REBUILDING EDINBURGH," to mark the new exhibition in its National Gallery. As a naval officer remarked, you can do any job you have to, as long as you have hope. The British pin their hope on the future. They pin their hope on the new Educational Bill, which will improve what we call the public schools, which advances the school age to sixteen, supplies at least one hot meal to the pupils, and argues for a certain instruction in religion, somewhat to the apprehension of Catholics and Nonconformists. These reforms sound pretty elementary in American ears, and to a man like Mr. Harold Laski they are simply catching up with what was promised but never fulfilled in the days of Ramsay MacDonald. But the people see in them a distinct advance and believe this time that they are going through.

I found a good many people who were chinning themselves on the Beveridge Report, nor were they all among that upper age bracket who might be the first to benefit. Some 275,000 copies of the Report in a penny pamphlet have been distributed to the armed forces; does it not argue for a security more sensible and far-reaching than any cash bonus? In the industrial Midlands I felt a good deal of apprehension lest the government pigeonhole the scheme. But members of the Labor Party assured me that the practical details (For instance, to whom shall the money be paid — to the husband or the wife? The Report doesn't say.) were being worked out in committee and that the National Government would certainly accept the gist of it. "Don't let them tell you we can't afford it," they added. "If we can afford to pay for this war, we certainly can afford the money necessary for Beveridge."

These were the promises Britain lived by as it came through the tunnel of the dark years. Up in Scotland they have taken the TVA to heart. They see the possibilities of harnessing some of their own water power, and what it would mean to Scotch prowess. The Scotchman is like our Southerner in his fierce pride for his own country; likewise, in his distrust of the money power of the capital. Said a young Scotchman with a wry smile, "Even if we got our hydroelectric power, London would tap it and tell us where it was needed."

Hope is kindled in the British Army by the best educational device I have ever seen applied to troops. The need was apparent after Dunkirk, when Britain had on its hands a weaponless army, angry because they had not been able to fight back, morose in their wonder as to what would come next. The men needed talking to, they needed the opportunity of asking questions, regardless of rank, and it was a godsend for the War Office when it found a Welsh civilian, Mr. W. E. Williams, with a native genius for adult education. You can imagine the fears he had to overcome — fears that his line would be too political, fears that the talks would fail to interest the soldier. But by the summer of 1941 he had ABCA (Army Bureau of Current Affairs) in full swing.

What he did was to organize town meetings in every platoon in the British Army. He chose the second lieutenants as the natural moderators, and he gave them “refresher” courses to help them handle the open and often heated discussions. Each week he distributes bulletins which deal alternately with military subjects and with civilian problems. An edition of 750,000 copies goes to the forces in Britain, and there are editions for Cairo, India, North Africa.

Here, for instance, is the leaflet on the United States Army. The first article is by Major E. M. Llewellyn, editor of *Stars and Stripes* in Europe. Then comes a quiz map of the forty-eight states, then the story of an American recruit, and finally “The Epic of Bataan,” by Lieutenant Colonel Warren J. Clear, reprinted from the *Reader's Digest*. As fair and terse a presentation as you could ask for.

Or take this one, which Mr. Williams himself has written. It is entitled *When the Lights Go On* and it contains the raw material for at least four ABCA discussions on the problems of post-war Britain. With this priming, no officer would fail to keep the talk swinging on demobilization. Here are suggestions on rebuilding the export trade, restoring the luxury trades, maintaining agriculture. Here are clear thinking about “the woman-bogey” and an admirable summary of “A Fair Chance for Children.”

There are regular ABCA meetings once a week, and supplementary talks whenever a visiting speaker, or the Brain Trust, as they call it, is available. Americans like Geoffrey Parsons, Jr., Henry Steele Commager, and Herbert Agar have appeared in the Brain Trust and have stood up to the give-and-take. The moderator is always addressed as “Sir”: there is that concession to rank. But otherwise the gloves are off.

At Cambridge and Oxford I talked with dons who had pulled out of their academic absorption to match their wits in these ABCA sessions. “What are they like as an audience?” I asked. “They may not have much learning,” said the Fellow of Trinity, “but they have a native shrewdness and a hunger for facts.” “Do they heckle?” “Just like any English audience. When they break in, it is because you haven’t told them enough. You’ll find hardheaded chaps in every company, who have the strangest fixed ideas. It is no good contradicting them. You have got to come back at the subject again and again until they are pulled down by their tent mates. Once when I was talking on the necessity of our helping Russia, a private stood up and asked, ‘Sir, is it not true that one Englishman is the equal of five Russians?’ — the inference of course being that we had better keep our weapons at home. I had to go back at him three times, working out the length of the Russian front, the number of German divisions, the tanks destroyed, before he sat down.”

“What recent subjects have you been speaking on?” I asked. “Well, after Pearl Harbor I talked about our relations with the United States and why it is important to know more about your people. Out of one row of ten soldiers, six had never heard of Pearl Harbor. Lately I have been talking about the British Empire. But the men don’t seem very interested. It may be my fault.” “Why not begin by talking about India?” I suggested with a grin.

ABCA meetings were held throughout the Eighth Army at every stage of its desert victory. They were being held in Sicily when I left. “Over the three months of this summer,” Mr. Williams told me, “we have had 62,000 talks in addition to the regular weekly meetings. Our bulletins and maps will be going up to the troops the first week after invasion.” When I add that Mr. Williams’s entire staff consists of twenty-six people, I think you will feel the respect I do for this going concern.

6

ENGLAND’s attitude toward America has been greatly changed. Gone — well, almost gone — is that certain condescension which so infuriated James Russell Lowell when the *Atlantic* was a pup. I should be ingenuous were I persuaded that a three-hundred-year tradition of superiority had been supplanted in twenty-two months by a guarantee of equality. But of this I am persuaded — that Britain is prepared to go further and to give more for the sake of reciprocity than we at present believe.

There are certain questions which a guest finds it rather difficult to put to his host. Yet they persist in his mind, and if I ask them now and at a distance, it is not mere idle curiosity. I wonder about the rebuilding of London — I wonder if the light and air will be kept in, now that it has been let in by the bombs. I wonder if the Cockney will really be moved out of his old haunts on the Isle of Dogs, on Bethnal Green and Poplar. (“At least one eighth of our population hereabouts will have to be moved away,” said one of the leading spirits in Oxford House, “if the city is to be what it really should be.”) I wonder if the London worker can be persuaded to live in flats for the sake of sanitation.

I wonder about the Wren churches which, in James Bone’s phrase, were being driven out of the city by the money-changers. Will money now be found for their restoration? I wonder about that magnificent prospect of St. Paul’s. “Can you imagine what it would be like if there were turf here, and trees?” I said innocently to the woman who was driving us. “Turf?” she said. “*Turf!* Why that land is worth a thousand pounds a foot!”

I repeat that these are not idle questions. For me they hint at the answer of whether or not England will continue to be a going concern after the war. It takes magnanimity of spirit to work for something outside of your own interests when you don’t have to.

What reassurance have we that reforms such as those in education and social security which have buoyed up the war worker in the dark years will be realized? As I see the Conservatives borrowing Labor’s thunder on the left, and Labor growing more Conservative as it feels the weight of authority, I wonder about His Majesty’s Opposition; if such objectives seem stubborn to obtain, will the Conservatives press them through or will the Labor Party have enough leadership and strength to avert unemployment and the economics of scarcity?

As I look questioningly at the political future of the British, so they look at ours. We do not appreciate how urgent is their desire for a non-partisan relationship. So long as our American opposition continues to taunt the Administration with being pro-British, so long must the British wear the preference for the Democratic Party. For obviously they would rather have the open hand than the cold shoulder. But what they most want is an understanding above party politics.

When I try to estimate the broadest collaboration possible, I wonder if we realize how much we in the United States affect the British balance?

(Said one of the most brilliant of the younger economists, “I pray nightly for a prosperous America when the shooting stops. When you people are in production, we all do well.”) I wonder if we know enough about the annual food bill for the United Kingdom. (A Conservative member of Parliament worked out the equation on the back of an envelope as we flew across the Atlantic. “Our food cost us roughly 400 million pounds before the war,” he said, “and to pay for it we could count on 250 millions from invisible exports, 150 millions from shipping, and 20 millions miscellaneous. But now we owe India money, and what do you think has happened to our shipping? Shall we have to export our people?”)

I wonder if mutual confidence can take the place of the competitive suspicion which has so often ruined Anglo-American relations in the past. You bump into suspicion all over Britain. I met it on the Clyde where in the shipyards I heard a man say, “It troubles us a little to think of you people turning out your huge fleet of cargo ships while here we build almost nothing but warships. What will you do with all those freighters afterwards?” I remember the fleets of Liberty ships which rusted up the Hudson, in Puget Sound, and down on the Chesapeake in the 1920’s — I know what I would do this time. And when you hear the airmen talk, you feel unspoken the apprehension about the transport planes and our new-found bases. Are we really out for the sovereignty of the skies?

It is a curious thing to know where reciprocity begins in human affairs and where it ends in business. An Englishman for whom I have great respect said to me frankly at the end of our luncheon, “There is one essential paradox you people don’t seem to realize. One minute you talk about the liquidation of the Empire, the self-sufficiency of the Dominions, and the stud farm which England will become after the war. One minute you speak of us as if we were a poor relation, and then five minutes later you are counting us in as a strong ally. Well, we can’t be both.”

I make no apology for American aspiration within reason. But I hate with all my heart that selfish belief that by good luck or good management we are destined to be the hogs of all creation. I think the collaboration of England and the United States is not only possible but within reach. I think it will be maintained only if each country within its own limits is more of a going concern than it was before the war. And I think that without it the chances for twenty years of peace are almost too bleak to contemplate.

CAMP FOLLOWER

The Trip Out; Room Hunt

by BARBARA KLAU

I

LIKE most wartime residents of Washington, D. C., I knew Union Station well. I knew it as a place that one must fight through onto an uncomfortable train in order to get somewhere. It was strictly a means to an end for me, and I had always dreaded the process of shoving, waiting, and dodging. On the evening of April 1, however, when I caught the "Jeffersonian" to leave Washington for good, I loved the whole familiar, dull procedure.

At the train gate I waited longer than usual, a whole hour, and the waiting mob packed me in more solidly than I had ever been packed. But the station building seemed lofty and exciting, and I enjoyed every minute of the waiting.

When the train gates finally opened, I lugged my bags down the length of the platform, smiling at the sprinting soldiers who flashed by me. I was even amused, for a change, when I found my car was, as usual, the last and most bedraggled of a long line of bedraggled coaches hooked on behind a gaudy, streamlined engine. The steward showed me to my chair, which turned out to be stuck in a permanently reclining position, and I tipped him lavishly and settled back to look around me.

The people who milled through the aisles were soldiers carrying their small canvas bags, businessmen weary after a day of priority seeking, and women in flowery spring hats. The confusion was considerable, as all the seats in the car were reserved, and finding the numbers on them entailed

unbuttoning and peering under the railroad company's neat white antimacassars.

I speculated who among this crowd was to be my seat companion for the next day and night, hoping it wouldn't be the particularly imperious lady with two fur coats over her arm who was haggling with her porter; hopeful that it might be the stocky soldier who reminded me of my brother-in-law as he lazily searched for his seat. But I didn't spot the girl who, it turned out, was to sit next to me, until, with a flurry of tweed coat, slim high heels, and baggage, she plumped down beside me.

I caught a glimpse of exceptionally white skin, red hair under a white turban, and curiously reddened eyes, and then she turned her head away.

Suddenly, as though realizing that, for better or worse, we were to be together for the next twenty-four hours, she looked at me and smiled, and I noted that she had a pretty face, made up of individually unpretty features. She introduced herself as Tracy Mead, told me she was a government worker, and offered me a stick of chewing gum. In less than thirty minutes, I was showing her a picture of my husband.

He had sent me the picture — taken at one of Camp Hickory's quick photo places — saying: "The only backdrop they had, honey, was a cutout of a large, fat man in a bathtub. If I had had my head attached to his body in the approved manner, it might have been a better picture, at that."

The picture showed him standing so straight that he seemed to lean over backwards, and his new GI cap was obviously too big. But it was my only photograph of Spencer in uniform, and I had shown it to a surprising number of people.

"Gosh," Tracy said. "He's a good-looking boy. Has he been in long?" I explained that he had been drafted six weeks before.

"And you're going out to live with him while he's in training?"

"I'm going to live as close as possible," I said.

A native New Yorker, BARBARA KLAU attended schools in New York and Connecticut, and was graduated from Vassar in 1941. After graduation she worked with the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs and the OWI. Her first book, *One Summer*, a story for children, was published by Viking when she was fourteen. Since then she has written three more books for children. Her husband is Spencer Klaw, former president of the *Harvard Crimson*, more recently connected with the *San Francisco Chronicle* and the United Press in Washington, D. C., and now in the Signal Corps.

This is the first of three installments.

Tracy said she was taking two weeks annual leave from her government job; and knowing how difficult it is for government workers actually to get those days of leave that pile up on paper for them, I asked her how she had managed it.

Immediately I realized I had asked the wrong question, for tiny red veins began to appear under her white skin, and I thought she was going to cry. She pulled a telegram out of her purse and handed it to me.

Even before I read it, the blurry stars stamped at the top told me that it was a death notice. It was her brother, killed on a high-tension wire. She had been called home for the funeral.

Either by determination or by the process of confiding in someone, Tracy's distress seemed to be wiped away. My condolences were clumsy, but Tracy seemed grateful, and she chatted with nervous animation about her brother, her home, and her parents. Her face softened when she told me about her fiancé, an aviation cadet who was stationed at an air base near her home in Texas.

"After the funeral," she said, "I think I'll sneak in a visit to him. And, you never can tell, he may just decide I should stay. It certainly wouldn't break my heart to leave Washington." She showed me her picture of him, which was as bad as mine of Spencer, and I was equally polite.

Within an hour we had exchanged addresses, traded cigarettes, and were friends. We compared Washington experiences, grouched mildly about the bureaucratic annoyances of our particular agencies, and groaned over housing conditions.

"I like Washington all right," Tracy said, "but gee, it costs such a lot to live there. Why, I didn't even have a fur coat when I came, and you know, there are so many places that you just feel funny going to if you don't have a fur coat."

We stopped talking about ourselves to watch two lieutenants squirming in their seats across the aisle. They had had to put their suitcases under their feet because the baggage rack had already been stuffed with duffel bags when they boarded the train. Now they were trying to find some comfortable way to fit both feet and bags into the limited space. I glanced at the two soldiers behind them — the owners of the duffel bags — who were watching the pantomime. One of them winked.

Tracy giggled and stretched her legs.

"I hope those gold braids are going a long way," she said. "They'll get mighty uncomfortable sitting like that. It's good for them after the way they march around Washington like little tin gods." Tracy's enjoyment of their discomfort was based on six months of working for the War Department.

2

TRACY had already had dinner, so I set out alone to walk the gauntlet of soldiers between our car and the diner, trying not to grin at their whistles.

Standing cramped in the little entrance hallway to the diner, dodging back and forth to let the hurried but imperturbable waiters get glasses out of the cabinets, I waited a good hour. A slight and elderly private talked to me with excessive politeness, and a drunken sailor, who was pocketing glasses every time the cabinet was opened, reeled around me.

"I'm just back from the Solomons," he said. "Furlough, fifteen-day furlough. Have a glass." I didn't want a glass, so he pocketed that one, too. "Just in case," he said. They made stiff lumps under his snug uniform. With a mild blocking movement, the courtly soldier got between the sailor and me, and bowing slightly from the waist, he introduced himself and asked me to have dinner with him.

It turned out that Itaska — the town I was headed for — was twelve miles away from where his wife lived. He wrote out her address for me — forming his letters with the same slow care he used in talking and eating. Later that evening, he found me in my seat, and wanted me to read his wife's latest letter. She was a devout woman, who had turned to God completely when he had gone, he told me.

"She's very fine, very Christian," he said. "She's just the finest little wife in the world." I saw pictures of her and his children. The letter, full of stilted intimacies, embarrassed me as though I had broken into their bedroom by mistake, and I knew my smile was growing stiff on my face. It was a relief when he left.

Tracy and I had no luck getting into the club car. A soldier who was also trying to get in braced himself against the jolting of the train and talked to us.

"So you're going to Hickory," he said. "Your husband must be in the Signal Corps." I said he was. The soldier shook his head. "Hickory's a hell hole," he said. "What's he doing out there?" I explained that he was in radio school.

"That's O.K.," the soldier said. "He'll get a good technical rating out of that. That's the best thing to get in the Army."

"Better than being an officer?" I asked.

"Hell, yes," he said. "What does an officer know? When you're a technician you can tell your officers which end's up."

"Do you like the Army?" I asked.

"Guys don't like the Army," he answered soberly.

"They're just in it. It's all right for what it is. I get mighty tired of these damn uniforms, though." He brushed his hand impatiently against his pants, and then grinned.

"Hell, I wish I had a wife," he said. "The Army'd be all right that way."

"Do you think it's a good idea to go out and live near my husband?" I was fishing for assurance.

"What else?" the soldier said. "It's a wonderful break for a guy." I could feel my face getting red with pleasure.

The lights were out in the coaches when we started back to our car, and we fumbled our way down the aisles, brushing against outflung arms and feeling our way from chairback to chairback. When we found our seat, Tracy went right to sleep, curled like a pretzel in her chair. She tended to uncurl during the night, but she didn't wake when I carefully extracted an elbow that drifted over into my ribs.

I went to the washroom early in the morning, stepping over a sleeping soldier who was lying across the doorway like a watchdog. It took a long time to get into the diner again, and I found the sailor with the bulging glasses under his blouse waiting there, too. He appeared to have been there all night. He wanted us to have a good-morning drink, and he pulled out innumerable glasses, polished them neatly with his handkerchief, and offered them to the hungry crowd. Not to be outdone, a few male civilians took him up on it.

We got into St. Louis about four, two hours late, just in time for me to board my train for Kansas City. Tracy — who had to wait over between connections — saw me off, and I waved to the slight, redheaded figure on the platform, knowing that we'd probably never see each other again.

3

MY NEW train was a streamliner — not only the engine but also the coaches — clean, slick, and comfortable; and my car was almost entirely filled with civilians, who haven't the gift of making themselves at home on trains as soldiers do. It was like stepping back to peacetime — no chatter, no moving around.

The Kansas City station reminded me of Washington, and after spending ten nickels calling hotels for a room, I began to feel that the housing situation must be about the same, too. The soldiers and girls who had settled down on the station benches for the night, sleeping obliviously, seemed to have hit on the only solution. But wanting a bath and aching for a chance to take my shoes off, I decided to try the Travelers Aid.

"Well, I think we can get you a room in a nice little family hotel," one of the women at the booth said. "Would that be all right? It isn't fashionable, but it's very clean." I said I'd settle for anything which included a bathtub, and she clinched it with a telephone call.

Her real concern for my comfort amazed me. I remarked on it to some cheerful sailors who shared my cab from the station.

"You got a room through what?" one of them asked.

"Through the Travelers Aid," I said.

He apparently didn't understand the nature of the Travelers Aid.

"Look, girlie," he said, drawing out his wallet. "I can lend you some money. I know how it is to be broke."

He probably would have given it to me, too, though I was in fact so loaded down with cash and American Express checks that it almost scared me. Much to my embarrassment, when the cab stopped to let me off, the sailor took one look at my "little family hotel" and repeated his offer.

It was certainly the tireddest-looking establishment I've ever been in. It looked like a cross between the Y.W.C.A. and one of the better flophouses. But the lumpy bed seemed heavenly and I went right to sleep.

In the station next morning, I began to run into the society of wandering Army wives in whose company I was to spend the next few months. Lugging baggage, tired and lonely, but all excited, they were going to see their husbands, some for a visit, some for as long as possible. They were mostly young, mostly well dressed, mostly attractive. That morning there were hundreds of us congregated in the Kansas City station.

We stood in front of the train gate, jockeying for position, waiting. It isn't only the men in the Army who get used to waiting — the Army wives get used to it, too. Waiting in train stations, waiting for husbands who may be scouring pots in the mess halls and can't let us know. In time I was to learn the art of waiting — of stretching out little tasks and insignificant thoughts.

The slacks-clad girl I sat next to on the train was weary. Two days on trains, a night spent in the Kansas City station "with a hell of a nice bunch of sailors," had done the trick. She had been visiting her husband for a week at Camp Lisle, "certainly the most godforsaken spot on the globe," she said.

"I stayed at the guest house," she told me. "There isn't a town anywhere around. You can't imagine that place. The men weren't allowed to

come up to our rooms, and you had to hide in a telephone booth to kiss your husband good night. I finally left before I had to. My husband said he was getting frustrated."

I hoped it wouldn't be that bad at Hickory.

The car I was in was filled with wives going to Itaska or Gladwyn, a smaller town closer to the camp, to visit their husbands. One girl was balancing a bakery box. "She's carried that cake all the way from Oregon," a girl told me. Another girl was holding a young baby, and was heavily pregnant with her next.

In the car ahead of us were a number of selectees, branded by their lack of insignia, their new-looking uniforms, and the bald look of fresh GI haircuts. We saw them trooping back and forth to the diner, led by a sergeant. They seemed young and subdued and a little frightened, like freshly sheared sheep being led to a sheep dip. I remembered everything my husband had told me about that trip, and I felt unexpectedly teary watching them. We all became silent as they filed through the car, and then giggled, embarrassed by our solemnity, when they were gone.

In four hours, we reached Itaska and I took a cab to the Wilbur Hotel, where I was staying. There was a waiting line at the desk. I had a reservation, but after hearing the clerk with well-exercised sympathy turn away person after person who also thought he or she had reservations, I grew nervous.

"We may have a cancellation later," was the standard brush-off. "Just have a seat. We'll call you."

A tall, imperious woman of about forty, casually wearing mink, fought for her rights like the younger wives.

"A double for Colonel and Mrs. Thompson," the clerk repeated after her. He searched for the reservation and found it. "Twin beds, Mrs. Thompson?" he asked, in the brisk unconcerned way in which male drugstore clerks cater to intimate feminine needs.

"No," she said firmly. "A double bed, please." The girl behind me nudged me.

Luckily Spencer's reservation had stuck, and I got into my room with no trouble. I was left to wait until evening, when he would arrive. I lingered over an indifferent sandwich as though it were a filet mignon. I bought a washcloth in the five and ten cent store, and kept the clerk an unnecessarily long time explaining Missouri's state tax system to me. I wrote letters, bathed, napped, and finally allowed myself the luxury of dressing.

When I had finished everything I had to read, had listened to voices in the hall until my stomach was

churning with excitement, I went down to the lobby.

There the scene had changed. No longer cool, quiet, and subdued, it was mobbed with soldiers and it hummed with voices. The revolving door never stopped revolving, the seats were all taken, soldiers circled around the desk and the entrance to the cocktail lounge four deep. They came so fast, and they looked so much alike in their standardized clothes, that I grew panicky, and hurried back to my room. So many women were sitting in the lobby, twisting their handkerchiefs, with their eyes glued to the door, searching each face. Back safely in my room, I remembered what a girl had told me.

"It's a shock when you first see your husband," she had said. "In strange clothes, and talking somehow differently. And the worst thing is that they even look different." I sat on the bed, staring at the door, half ready to laugh at myself, half ready to cry. Finally I went into the bathroom to comb my hair — and at that moment Spencer arrived.

My stomach settled into place, and my life as a camp follower was under way.

4

I FOUND the Travelers Aid office in Gladwyn, Missouri, sandwiched between a drugstore and a cleaning establishment, at the top of a flight of echoing wooden steps.

I had already been room hunting for two hours that morning, ever since my bus from Itaska landed me in town. But I had found nothing but advice, freely given by friendly home-owners who had no vacancies. All of them had told me to go to the Travelers Aid — the official USO housing agency.

The office was mobbed with girls when I went in. The girl at the desk was talking to a small blonde with a husky, brown-eyed little girl at her side.

"How was that place on Wood Street you looked at?" she asked.

"Same story," the mother said. "She didn't want kids. Patty scares 'em all, don't you, baby?"

"I'm an awful nuisance," the little girl said matter-of-factly.

"You'd think it was a sin for a soldier's wife to have a child," the mother said.

"Well, it makes it tough, all right," the worker agreed. "I may have something this afternoon, though, Mrs. Huston. Drop in then, will you?"

We all wanted the same thing, and we were all told that there might be some vacancies reported by afternoon. Each newcomer was urged to live in Itaska, and each felt, as I did, that it was too far from camp. I lit a cigarette, sat down, and lingered after

the others had gone, hating to hit the pavements again. I introduced myself to the girl at the desk, who was calm and efficient and pleasant. Her name was Margaret Lewis.

A soldier came in — red in the face, and obviously in a hurry.

"Can I leave a message here?" he asked. "I imagine my girl will come by here sooner or later. Her name's Lydia."

"Certainly," Margaret said. "What's the message?"

"Just tell her to leave my hat here — that I'll be in to pick it up later."

"All right. What's her last name?"

The soldier thought a moment.

"Lydia, Lydia something. It begins with a P. Lydia Pinkham," the soldier said. "That's it — Lydia Pinkham."

Margaret looked up at him. "You're sure?" she asked.

The soldier grinned. "No," he said. "But it sounds familiar. Anyway, she's got my hat. Tell her for God's sake that it isn't funny, and I've got to get that hat back. I've been dodging MP's all day." Margaret wrote the message on a pad, with the "Lydia Pinkham" underlined.

"Don't forget my message now," the soldier warned, and he rushed out, his GI shoes clattering on the wooden steps. Margaret filed the message under P in her message file.

Just then the phone rang. Margaret wrote as she listened, and then said: "Yes, certainly I will, Mrs. Upton. Thanks so much for calling us."

"You might try this one," she said. "I don't know what it's like, but it's a vacancy, at least. She won't be home till four, so try after that. Let me know what happens, will you? The woman has refused to rent the room to the last five girls I've sent over." She didn't explain further than that, and I took the slip eagerly.

On the way out I passed a girl sitting on the stairs, holding one of her shoes in one hand and rubbing her foot with the other. "Lord, this town!" she said crossly. "My feet's killing me."

My feet were killing me, too, in another two hours. Margaret had told me that I might try the cabin courts on the edge of town, and with a mental picture of setting up housekeeping in a cozy little one-room house, I trudged out to look at them.

They were clustered on the main highway entering Gladwyn, interspersed with diners, groceries, the town's bowling alley, and the Army Prophylactic station.

The station was a clean, square little building,

set back from the road, with a brightly painted sign reaching out to announce it. Over the door was a naked green light. Stop and go, I thought, all done in lights. Very neat.

Two of the cabin courts had "No Vacancy" signs up, but the third — advertising "10 cabins, all strictly modern, 10" — had two vacancies, I found, on digging the manager out from under a bed where she was cleaning.

Her name was Mrs. Tiede (pronounced Tidy) and she showed me around her establishment proudly. "Now this one here," she said, "is one of my very nicest. We've just remodeled it, too. Careful of wet paint." The cabin was charming at first glance, with three large windows and baby-blue walls.

"And Venetian blinds," she said, pulling them up and down rapidly. "I just got them up. They make it pretty, don't they? They're mighty hard to get nowadays."

The bathroom was as spotless as the cabin, and almost as lacking in essential equipment. The furniture in the neat little room consisted of a bed, a straight chair holding an ashtray, and a small gas heater in one corner. There was no dresser.

"The girls that've lived in here have just made themselves right at home," Mrs. Tiede said. "The last one brought a radio and a little bedside lamp, and it was real cute."

"Where did she put her clothes?" I asked.

"Now, I don't really know," Mrs. Tiede said cheerfully. "I guess she kept them in her suitcases."

"Could I see the closet?" I asked.

"Well, as a matter of fact, we haven't got around to putting a closet in this cabin yet," Mrs. Tiede said. "Most of the girls hang up their dresses on those hooks there." She pointed to two sagging hooks on the wall. She stood in the middle of the room, and looked around with satisfaction.

"It's cute, isn't it?" she said. I agreed that it was, and remembering the swarm of girls in Margaret's office, asking for rooms — rooms of any kind — I asked the price.

"Well," Mrs. Tiede said. "I used to charge sixteen a week for this one, but now with the Venetian blinds, I have to charge seventeen." I multiplied quickly and found that the rent amounted to considerably more than we had paid for a whole apartment in Washington.

"Have you a cabin without the Venetian blinds?" I asked.

The next cabin — which cost only fifteen a week — had both dresser and closet, but Mrs. Tiede obviously looked down on it.

"Of course, this one hasn't just been remodeled," she said. It, too, was scrupulously clean, with orange

and blue linoleum on the floor. I told her I wanted to look around a little more, but persuaded her to hold it for me until five, when I'd call. Fifteen dollars appalled me, but it was cheaper than the hotel in Itaska, and Gladwyn was closer to camp.

Talking about rents, I later asked Margaret if the OPA hadn't ever noticed Gladwyn.

"Sure," she said. "They came in here and clamped down ceilings kind of indiscriminately, and people took their rooms off the market. Frankly, we were relieved when they went away. The cabin courts can't be touched anyway because they simply multiply their daily rate by seven to get a weekly rate."

5

I PATIENTLY covered whole streets of houses that afternoon, chatting with landladies and incumbent Army wives. The people were all friendly and talkative, but with one exception the answer was always no. The exception was a temporary room. I could have it for a week, the lady told me, but the couple, who had gone on furlough, would want it back after that. The room was eight dollars a week.

"I have a lot of girls here," she said, leading me up the stairs. "When I first started renting, I put in a game room in the attic for them. This room is right off the game room."

It was, as a matter of fact, hardly off the game room. A partition that reached not quite to the top of my head cut off one corner of the large bare attic.

"The girls use the game room during the day, but it's very private up here at night," the landlady assured me.

"What about light?" I asked, noticing none in the room.

"Well, I let the couple keep on the light in the game room," she said, "and that gives them plenty."

She explained the by-laws of the house. "The bathroom's on the first floor," she said. "I don't let the girls use my kitchen — it just makes too much confusion, you know; and I don't like any radios in the house. Also I don't like smoking, but I don't suppose you smoke, do you?" She didn't wait for an answer, and I hid the slightly tobacco-stained two fingers of my right hand, and decided it would be good for me to give up cigarettes for a while anyway. I said I'd call her back that afternoon.

"Well," she said as I left, "I hope for your sake that you find something permanent, dear, but if not you can stay here while you look around." It was phrased like an invitation — at eight dollars a week and no smoking.

As I went down the steps of the house, a cab coasting languidly along the street pulled up beside me.

"You look as though you're room hunting," the driver said. I told him I was. "Well, most all the girls in Gladwyn are," he said. He was a good-looking young man, and I involuntarily wondered — hating myself for the thought — why he wasn't in the Army.

"I know of a nice room," he said. "Right on the square. Want me to take you there? I'm going that way, anyway. I won't charge you."

Thinking how extraordinarily nice all Gladwynians were, I said hopefully: "Do you really know of a room?"

"Sure," he said. "Just like I said. A nice one."

"Look," I said, ready to grab at any chance. "Could you give me the address, and I'll go by there later. I want to finish up this street first."

"Well, I can't remember the address, but I could drive you right there." He sounded a little devious.

"Which side of the square is it on?"

"Come on, hop in," the man said. "It'd only take a minute in the cab." I refused, cursing myself for a suspicious fool when the young man shrugged his shoulders and drove away. But I was right, I discovered, when I talked to Margaret about it later.

"Yes," she said. "I've heard of that stunt. Those places on the square are colorful spots. That's where most of the syphilis that the camp authorities have a fit about starts. I guess some of the cab drivers are in cahoots with the houses." I never saw a girl coming down the steps of one of the houses on the square after that without wondering.

By the time it was four, my feet and head ached, and I could feel a hole growing in the toe of my left stocking. As nervous as though I were looking for a job, I stopped in at the bus station, the only public place I knew, to clean up before going to the house that Margaret had told me about. I walked over there — directed by my USO map of Gladwyn — with my head held stiffly, trying to keep the wind from mussing my hair.

A boy of high-school age answered the door, and I asked him if they had a room for rent.

"Have we got a room for rent, Mom?" he yelled back into the house. His mother called him, and when he came back, he asked: "Did the USO send you?"

I told him that they had, and he moved a bicycle which partially blocked the door, and invited me in.

His mother, Mrs. Upton, was lying on a bed in the dining room in a housecoat and hair net, with cold cream on her face.

"Excuse the way I look," she said. "I just got back from work." I could see that her hair was red-brown under her hair net, and her features were handsome and energetic, but beginning to be blurred by lines and excess flesh. She quizzed me about where I came from, how long I wanted the room, and what my husband's schedule was. I felt more and more as though I were job hunting.

Finally, I concluded I had passed the first inspection because she got up, walking as though her feet ached, and led me back into the room.

"It isn't much," she said. "But here it is." The room, in the back of the house across from the kitchen, seemed almost too good to be true. It was light, with a real rug on the floor, a closet, dresser, double bed which sagged only slightly, a card table covered with a fresh cloth, and a private entrance, opening out onto a concrete porch on the side of the house. I told her I thought it was wonderful.

"Oh, it isn't much," she insisted, "but the girls always seem to like it." We sat on the bed, with an ashtray between us, and talked it over.

"The girls here take care of their own rooms, and we all share the bathroom," she said. "It's right next door to this room. You use linen as you want; it's in a cabinet in the bathroom. And it's all live and let live. We're just an ordinary family, an ordinary American family, and we do what we want and let other people do what they want." A girl, younger than the boy, and strikingly pretty, appeared in the doorway.

"Mother, is this dress all right to wear to the party?" she asked, after looking me over.

"You know it's all right. Go on away, Patricia," Mrs. Upton said. She pronounced it Patreecia. A small dog came into the room, sliding between the girl's legs.

"I hope you like dogs," Patricia said. I assured her I did, and she disappeared.

"You use your own entrance," Mrs. Upton went on, "and go your own way, and we'll get along fine. The kids make a lot of noise, but we're just ordinary people, and Mr. Upton and I work very hard." I found my mind jumping to follow her transitions, and noticed that her voice carried just the edge of a whine.

Patricia appeared in the doorway again, just to look this time.

"Go on about your business, Pat," Mrs. Upton said. "You know you're just showing off." There was a hearty yell from the next room.

"That's Ralph, my son," Mrs. Upton told me. "He's just showing off, too."

She asked me how long I had been in Gladwyn,

and what I thought of it. I said I hadn't seen much except the square and a few residential streets.

"You've seen it all," she said. "All there is to see. That's Gladwyn, the whole town. We aren't natives, of course," she added emphatically. "We come from St. Louis. But Mr. Upton is in business down here."

"Oh, it's a terrible mess, this town," she exclaimed. "All these soldiers. I'm afraid for Patricia. I really am. I tell you I'm afraid to let her go out in the streets at night." I shook my head sympathetically, wondering if all this meant that she was going to take me. She got up and walked over to the doorway, and I followed, ready to admire anything she pointed out. Clotheslines were laced across the porch, and concrete steps led into the obviously untended part of the yard.

"Now, you see those are your steps," she said. I looked obediently at the steps.

"Did the USO tell you what I charge?" she asked. They hadn't and she went on. "Well, I charge eight a week. I could get thirteen with this private entrance, thirteen dollars, but I wouldn't want to take it from the girls."

"Well," I said, trying not to sound too eager. "I'd like to take it, if it's all right."

"Yes, it's all right," she said. "You'll find we're just ordinary people. When will you move in?"

I said, "Tomorrow, if that's all right with you."

"Sure, any time, any time," Mrs. Upton assured me. "I don't give kitchen privileges, you understand. I'd like to, because I know it's hard for you girls, but I just don't want to make any more bother for the girl who works for me. Of course, as for coffee in the morning, that's all right, and if you want to keep milk or beer in the icebox, well that's all right, too. But I just can't have cooking."

Her ground rules sounded pleasantly lax, and I accepted them gratefully.

"Shall I pay you now?" I asked.

"Oh, now, any time, it doesn't matter," she said. I gave her the money, anxious to get it into her hands and have the deal closed. "We'll count this as of tomorrow," she said, fingering the bills expertly.

"Are you going to live here?" Patricia asked, this time all the way in the room.

"Yes, she is," Mrs. Upton said. "Though what business it is of yours, I can't imagine."

"That's swell," Patricia said.

Ten minutes later, I went out of my own door, locked it after me with my own key, and walked down my own porch steps. I set off for the bus station where I was to meet Spencer, looking over the town with the newly possessive eye of a resident. I felt I had won a major victory.

POEMS

by STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT

ANNOTATED EDITION

AND there it is and could be worse
With notes and preface and the rest
And every kind of teacher's aid
To harry schoolboys into learning
The unpremeditated verse
Written because the heart was hot
With quite a different kind of burning,
And that is the revenge of time
And that, they say, the workman's pay,

It may be so, I wouldn't know.
I wrote it poor, in love, and young,
In indigestion and despair
And exaltation of the mind,
Not for the blind to lead the blind;
I have no quarrel with the wise,
No quarrel with the pedagogue,
And yet I wrote for none of these.

And yet there are the words, in print,
And should an obdurate old man
Remember half a dozen lines
Stuck in his mind like thistle-seed,
Or if, perhaps, some idle boy
Should sometime read a page or so
In the deep summer, to his girl,
And drop the book half finished there
Since kissing was a better joy,
Why, I shall have been paid enough.
I'll have been paid enough indeed.

SONG FOR THREE SOLDIERS

OH, where are you coming from, soldier, fine soldier,
In your dandy new uniform, all spick and span,
With your helmeted head and the gun on your shoulder,
Where are you coming from, gallant young man?

*I come from the war that was yesterday's trouble,
I come with the bullet still blunt in my breast;
Though long was the battle and bitter the struggle,
Yet I fought with the bravest, I fought with the best.*

Oh, where are you coming from, soldier, tall soldier,
 With ray-gun and sun-bomb and everything new,
 And a face that might well have been carved from a boulder,
 Where are you coming from, now tell me true!

*My harness is novel, my uniform other
 Than any gay uniform people have seen,
 Yet I am your future and I am your brother
 And I am the battle that has not yet been.*

Oh, where are you coming from, soldier, gaunt soldier,
 With weapons beyond any reach of my mind,
 With weapons so deadly the world must grow older
 And die in its tracks, if it does not turn kind?

*Stand out of my way and be silent before me!
 For none shall come after me, foeman or friend,
 Since the seed of your seed called me out to employ me,
 And that was the longest, and that was the end.*

LITTLE TESTAMENT

I have lived. I have thought and labored, I have loved and possessed
 my love
 To the uttermost inch of flesh, till the deep voice cried in us both.
 I have not cut my coat according to the color of the cloth.
 When the world passed by me in the street, it could have my fist or
 my glove.

My people were soldiers for the most part — they had Spain and
 Ireland in their shroud;
 I was a coward and afraid, yet I have not shamed them, I think.
 I have not refused the drink when there might be venom in the drink.
 I have written the verse for my pleasure, not for praise or money or
 the crowd.

Loving two countries well, sweet France, like a wall-sunned pear,
 And this red, hard apple, America, tart-flavored, tasting of the wild,
 I can lie at ease in either, yet may the child of my child
 Run the heaps of gold leaves in the Fall, see the red leaf hanging in
 blue air.

With the five dull tools of the senses, I have seen great Jupiter enskied,
 Tasted the buds of spruce, the buds by the lakeside in the Spring,
 Smelt woodsmoke and snow unfallen, heard the gold horns answer to
 the string
 And touched the entire earth, on the mountain, naked as a bride.

I have been a traitor and loyal, a fool and the enemy of fools;
 Certain friends I would not betray. I have worn ragged overcoats for
 pride.
 I shall keep the delusions of my soul a secret until I have died,
 Because of a stubborn nothing that would not answer to the rules.

So it is. So be it with me. I make my mark and depart.
 Children of children of my children, you will yet have a stinging in
 your blood,
 A dark cell, a hidden laughter, an eye seeing bad and good
 That chooses one mask in public but a different image in the heart.

Now the mind rusts into madness, the horses run without bit,
 The paltry body is nothing but mechanics of bone and skin.
 Nevertheless I have spoken. This nothing spoke for its kin
 And loved one woman completely. Let her remember it.



THE SEARCH FOR THE DEMOCRATIC MAN

by M. H. HEDGES

1

THE Twentieth Century Fund reports that 110 agencies, public and private, are engaged in some form of post-war planning. The movement toward planning appears to have reached popular dimensions. The pendulum has swung. America apparently is embarked upon a program based upon the idea of the perfectibility of environment. Time was, not so long ago, when America was animated by the idea of the perfectibility of the human individual. Between these two ideas and these two programs there is a chasm immeasurably deep.

For whom is this planning to be done? Human nature may not change, but ideas about human nature change. The Catholic man of the Middle Ages became the Economic man of the twentieth century. Who will come next? Will it be the Democratic man? The hard, recalcitrant human being at the moment has the floor. Is this because men cannot do much to themselves, and because it is easier to change external institutions than to shape the hard being who is to inhabit them?

There was a time when America determinedly moved upon the idea of the perfectibility of human nature. Our whole public school system attests to this fact. Horace Mann in his closing admonition to students and disciples said: "Be ashamed to die

until you have won some victory for humanity." Apparently Mann died in the conviction that, given a free school system, the normal man will emerge with a crowning achievement, service to humanity — that is, a social point of view.

Certainly Horace Mann, being a practical statesman, was not philosophically a Transcendentalist, but he expressed well the same faith in human nature that Emerson, Channing, and Thoreau felt. The Transcendentalists had vigorously rebelled against the dour views of John Calvin and Cotton Mather. Their faith was immunizing, but it left a surprising impress upon their generation; for without it, and without them, the slaves could not have been freed, and the economic revolution involved in the Civil War could not have taken place.

What we miss usually in the picture is the fact that, though Emerson and his group lived to slay the Calvinistic dragon, they themselves were only more mellow and engaging Calvinists. The Transcendentalists never surrendered the inner truth of self-discipline which made Puritanism the commanding point of view of a developing republic for two centuries. Moral law was a reality to the sages of Concord. It set as difficult limitations upon their own conduct as did the Calvinists. Probably the only actual difference between the two schools was a difference of experience.

Alexander Smith speaks of Emerson's "cold, cheerless glitter." But the quiet lawns of Concord and Boston, the arriving prosperity, were vastly different from the bleak shores and dark forests and

Director of Research for the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers since 1924, MARION H. HEDGES has had much to do with labor relations and personnel planning in industry. He is the author of three books, *Iron City*, *Dan Minturn*, and *A Strikeless Industry*, and the editor of the *Electrical Workers Journal*.

ubiquitous savages, the famine and the struggle, that Cotton Mather and his circle knew intimately. Americans are rightly reputed to be a complacent and generous people, but too infrequently this geniality is traced to a complacent and generous environment, to a continent rich in natural resources, and to the certitude of an economy of plenty for all.

Strange to say, the self-disciplined man of Emerson, who chose simple living (on ambrosia), knew kinship with the superman of Friedrich Nietzsche. Nietzsche, son of a clergyman, was influenced by Emerson and even gave praise to the leader of the Transcendentalists. With one of those leaps across time and distance that human nature frequently takes, the Olympian of Concord found a response in the superman of Weimar who abandoned moral law to the pigs. And still more strangely, Nietzsche's philosophy has its physical embodiment in an Austrian paperhanger, who sought by the sword, *à la Nietzsche*, to fasten the sovereignty of a gang of hypocritical supermen upon a reluctant world.

2

HITLERISM poses to the modern world the old, old problem of evil. The moral contained in the present world drama engulfs all other issues. Economic determinism offers little or no explanation for the rape of Poland, for the butchering of the Czechs, the assassination of Holland, the humiliation of Denmark and France, and the slow torturing of Norway. When frantic women and children, refugees on familiar roads of home, looked up at troubled skies, to be greeted by a rain of machine-gun bullets from well-protected, indomitable supermen in aeroplanes, there were human beings in those planes, organisms in human form, gleefully pressing automatic triggers and spraying wholesale death on defenseless fellows. On defenseless fellows! On other human beings, thereby denying their own humanity, their blood relationship to other members of the human family.

Is this not evil? Is there anything else that can be called evil? And is there any other explanation than that there is a hard, cruel core to human nature itself that must be curbed or this propensity for cruelty will flare out at any time, at any place on this globe? When the mind and the sensibilities hold this basic fact up against the dim light of history, all other issues are dwarfed in magnitude, and seem poor and trivial.

If world events, then, force us to a revaluation of human nature, how can we avoid a conclusion

somewhere near the old Calvinistic doctrine of the depravity of man? Harsh as this view is, we must acknowledge that men are like that. We may take refuge in the more genial assumption of this democracy that human beings, over this contracting globe, are in various stages of development. We may, therefore, increase man-hour exposure of barbarians to democratic education and institutions, and hope to produce the good citizen. Still, caught as we are in a desperately tragic situation, the conclusion remains that there are profound antisocial propensities in all of us.

What confuses the intellectual picture is the fact that the modern tool of advancement, scientific organization, has been used to promote perversity. Hitlerism and Nipponism lay claim to modernism, to belonging to the wave of the future, simply because a Messerschmitt can climb to an altitude of 40,000 feet, or Zero planes are produced on a mass-production basis. Hitler bases his system on the antisocial instincts — on treachery, deceit, and the will to kill. But this fact is not so significant as the fact that Hitler is *willing* to have it so — he and millions like him.

Somewhere in his omnibus of works, Balzac sagely remarks that few of us could resist the wish, if we could by nodding, to destroy a mandarin in China and to inherit his sumptuous wealth; that is, if we could do so and remain undetected.

Perhaps this is actually what the realists of this decade — the Hemingways, the Cains, the Steinbecks — have been trying to say to us: Men are like that. Men are willing killers. Men are devious and cruel. Everyone is a sadist or a potential sadist.

It is not a palatable doctrine. It carries further. Nazi world strategy is based on the assurance that Nazis and potential Nazis reside in every country of the world. Nazi tactics of world conquest banked on fifth columns strong enough and unscrupulous enough to precipitate civil war in democratic countries. Democracies must see that Nazism arises not only out of external institutions, but out of propensities in human nature itself. In building a new world, therefore, the kinds of institutions which are built must be designed to aid the individual toward what used to be called conquest of himself.

The old Calvinism believed in "grace" — which, I take it, if the term be translated into modern concepts, means self-discipline. No maximum amount of external control by government, by law, by decree, can take the place of self-limitation upon an individual's conduct. This is what education has actually meant in the development of the

republic: the setting of limits by the individual upon his own actions, and this is what "social" means.

Not long ago the chairman of a large public agency said to me, "No amount of legislation can bring us through. Somehow man must want the good life badly enough to refrain from doing certain antisocial things." While Nazism gives the world the shocking picture of human beings divested of their own humanity, exercising force to the extreme, Nazism also presents the picture of its own failure. Violence — hideous and intolerable violence — has not enslaved the minds of Norwegians, Frenchmen, Czechs, and Dutchmen.

So the old Calvinism frankly faced the problem of the savage depths in all men. The old Calvinism did not divide the world between capitalists and labor, Nazis and free men, fascists and communists, but between the self-disciplined and the wayward. If this working concept is nearer to truth than the others, then a nice problem in administration is posed to social planners and administrators everywhere. A new equilibrium must be established in the state, a new balance, as between force and freedom.

Even a quiet, studious man like Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes knew and stated frankly that physical force, in the last analysis, controls the world: "The foundation of jurisdiction is physical power." "I used to say, when I was young, that truth was the majority vote of that nation that would lick all others. . . . One test of truth is a reference to either a present or an imagined future majority in favor of our view."

"We or they" — the simplification of the foregoing formula heard so frequently in this hour of the world's peril — dramatizes the choice every man, every organization, and every nation must make at some time. Hitler and Hitlerism, and the global war of 1943, have laid forever the doctrines of pacifism, passive resistance, complacent commercialism, and meekness. Man is a fighting animal. In the last analysis physical force rules the world, but physical force is not force, is not potent, unless it is the expression of moral force — unless it can unite itself somehow with collective effort, unconscious though it be, for humanity's preservation.

The interplay of force on the international scene is duplicated in the domestic arena. Americans, as is often remarked, have a childlike faith in law. "There ought to be a law" is almost a national shibboleth. And yet Americans are peculiarly a lawless people. Bootleggers, racketeers, lynchers, black-market operators, and fifth columnists are

but signs of those who believe that force is more important than law. Corporation lawyers are facetiously described as skilled men who show their clients not how to keep but how to circumvent the law. Our Western movies glorify physical force. We are a nation of anarchists. Our respect for lawmaking coupled with our flouting of law makes us a mystery to most aliens. The indescribable energy, the will to do, which expresses itself in our great technological exploits drives us easily across well-defined lines of law and order.

3

THE question before all of us is how to build the Personalized State. Can operation of the state develop enough historical perspective, and keep enough sensitivity to humanism, and have enough wisdom to exercise force in behalf of freedom? Can areas of freedom, of experimentation, governed by rules of the game, where the individual citizen, the individual organization, and on the wider international scene the individual nation, may practice self-discipline, be permitted while the state suppresses those that would mutilate and destroy freedom? Can the state (which is pure, unadulterated force) be made strong without making the individual citizen weak?

It would appear, therefore, that if the state is to be kept personal it must grapple with the central problem of government in the twentieth century. The state must take on the aspects of the parent or guardian, rather than the aspects of the policeman or the thug. The state must constantly strive to divest itself of its own power. Moreover, in the planned world of the future, the state must create instrumentalities within itself to do its principal task better.

It may well be that a Bureau of Human Relations will be established to carry on the principal business of adjusting disputes between economic groups and to extend understanding between "classes." The state will strive to get each group, each industry, to play an orderly and harmonious part in the national whole. Faint outlines of this department may be detected in the National War Labor Board, the National Labor Relations Board, and the Conciliation Service.

It is likely that partisanship as it is practiced today will wither and be less vocative. Endless time is wasted by jockeying of private vested interests for advantage. This is probably due to the fact that the state, as now conceived, is not a self-assured instrumentality at all, but a battleground,

a mere territory, where strong private interests struggle to carve out a larger share in the national income. When men come into a view of Personalized State — the national good — as the controlling concept in conduct, mere local interests, mere state interests, and mere class interests will not seem so important — mere politicians will disappear.

It may well be that a Bureau of Psychology will come to be looked upon as indispensable. Analysts will be constantly at work to discover and to evaluate currents of public opinion. Faint outlines of this function are already apparent in private institutions which poll public sentiment.

Under the ministration of such a government, it is plain that that coöperative society which has been the conscious aspiration of labor unionists for more than a century will move toward realization.

However this may be, it appears plain that global war and the specter of totalitarianism have administered a sharp defeat to the idealist. Pure force — yes, physical force — plays a greater part in human affairs than the idealist has ever been willing to admit. Men are not good, but good and evil together. The duty of the state is to find ways of getting “grace” to flourish, and to reward “good” citizens. The problem of planners in the international field is no different.

When the peace comes and there is an opportunity to put “plans” into effect on an international scale, few men will take the position that the clock of the world may be wound up and left to tick away while soldier citizens return to the precincts of their own communities, there to pass their years in getting and spending, and in partisan conflict. Opinion in the United States in our day differs from opinion in the United States after World War I in one fundamental respect: force is to be given some orderly international materialization.

Contacts with workers, businessmen, and government officials, high and low, indicate that America has come to visualize already the kind of world which will follow the armistice — a world in which force will play a part. Soldiers, too, are concerned with this question, quite frankly. The agenda for the post-war world certainly include: —

1. An international commission with sovereignty to suppress any disturber of the peace anywhere upon the globe.
2. An international police force governed by the commission, to do the suppressing.
3. Armies of occupation for a long period following the armistice.
4. Some new type of democratic army that will be developed with the dual purpose of training youth for peaceful production and for war.

The concept of national planning in the United States is about ten years old. In fact, the exact date of the rise of this movement may be set with certitude. When this concept began to take hold of the imagination of a few men, a decade ago, the term “planning” was in disrepute. Many Americans considered planning as a derivative of the Russian Revolution, and viewed it as a synonym for regimentation.

It is apparent now that instead of planning's being a derivative of the Russian Revolution, the Russian Revolution is best understood as one aspect of a world movement to personalize government and to move government nearer to the people. The era has been called the age of the people's revolution. As soon as Americans perceived these relationships, their attitude toward planning changed. Now planning is accepted, perhaps too freely, and men are turning to it almost pathetically as an escape from a disturbing present.

When public opinion changes rapidly, as it has done in the United States in regard to planning, it rides in upon a ground swell, surging up from the depth. There is some profound compulsion beneath the faith of Americans in planning. For that matter, there is profound compulsion in the world's new faith in planning. Whence came this compulsion?

4

THE paroxysm of war marks the breakup of an old order. Certainly one aspect of this old order, as I have shown, has been its amoral character, reaching a climax in the willingness of Nazis to bomb and machine-gun defenseless women and children. The Nazi war machine is the glorious expression of the anti-humanistic forces pervading the old world, now in its death throes. And the Nazi state is the Mechanized State (the magnificent fruition of materialism), in contrast to the Personalized State, toward which planners strive. But just as the Nazis expected to find fifth columnists to do their bidding in all democratic countries, so they also expected the Mechanized State to win converts in all countries, for they rightly discerned at work in all other countries the same forces of materialism undermining humanity.

Indeed, it can be shown that the worship of the machine has been a motive in American as well as German life. The movement for rationalization in industry, the speed-up system of Bedaux, the sacrifice of the human element to mechanized production, the disappearance of security, the

spread of poverty, the loss of respect for personality, have their counterpart in every industrial country.

The goose-stepping German soldier is the counterpart of the industrial robot. The German war machine is the climacteric development of mechanized industrial organization. The war of machines records the ebbing life of humanity. Even the counter-revolutionary order of a Karl Marx was founded on the *mechanized* theories of a Hegel, and Hitlerism sprang from the same source.

In a mechanized world, *things* take on supreme value. The struggles of the past century, both within nations and between nations, have been principally over land and goods. The class struggle is a struggle over things. The modern world — the one being done to death in Italy, on the steppes of Russia, in the Solomons — was a world divided against itself. A deep cleft ran down the center of every community, between those who have and those who have not. The hunger of modern man in the dying order was primarily for unity. The cry of modern man was for fellowship. The goal of all panaceas was the re-creation of the community. And the supreme task of planners is to find a way to attain unity.

The irony lies in the fact that the mere creation of a plan, or the adoption of new technique, will not bring unity. Unity must be achieved before a plan has a chance for success. And so it comes about that, given a world where men are rational and wise, all men — at least all civilians — would consider their principal task the search for a rallying point round which all men of good will might assemble and unite.

The planners believe that full employment — or, as Ernest Bevin says, social security — is such a unifying concept. It certainly has potency. It would give labor one of its long-sought goals, that of stability and purchasing power. Full employment would give businessmen and farmers markets for their goods. Such a goal as full employment

would transfer the aim of every community from material to human production. It would personalize and humanize the economic system.

But the economic system as we now have it is still pretty much at war over things. Laissez faire may be dead among individuals, but in economic groups it is still a reality. The War Production Board has only mirrored the economic struggle — the class struggle, if you will.

Too long Americans have neglected the area of human relations. Breaking down barriers between economic groups must precede the winning of unity. In this sense Karl Marx, Nietzsche, Hegel, Lenin, and all other prophets of struggle should be scrapped with the dying order. Americans could do well to open the works of the itinerant carpenter, Walt Whitman. He alone grasped the full meaning of democracy. What a commentary it is upon our common life that Walt Whitman has so long been looked upon chiefly as a barbarian, a fool, and a clown!

Planning, then, rests upon the profound compulsion of preserving humanity. For the twentieth century, planning is another word for humanism. It represents a movement to place man above the sterile system of materialism, which reaches its climax and death in Hitler's global war.

Planning appears to be the one chance left for humanity in a robot world. Will humanity win? Who knows! The odds are against man. Human institutions created for freedom appear to have a way of enslaving the men for whom they were created. Moreover, it is man's destiny to be preoccupied with material things and to overvalue them.

And finally, within man's own make-up are forces of dissolution. Man's willingness to enslave and to exploit his fellows tethers man to a slave order. The struggle is old and familiar. The odds are enormous, the stage gigantic. This time the drama has prodigious proportions. It is drawn to world scale. The action is lurid, dramatic, and, to sensitive persons, terrifying.

MANY RIVERS

by FERRIS GREENSLET

1

PERHAPS the reason I have brought so eager a passion to the fishing of so many rivers is that I have never had enough of that sport. Three times in forty years I have taken a full month off just to fish — once in County Cork, once in the Cévennes, once on the far isle of Anticosti. Apart from those halcyon cycles of the moon, my fishing has always been over long week-ends or, at best, two week-ends with the week between; never so far away that telegrams, or the telephone plus swift-footed messenger, couldn't catch up and keep me in touch with work.

On the other hand, as Lord Grey says in his *Fly Fishing*, "work, if it be of an interesting sort and not crushing in amount, is a fine preparation for the country. Such work is stimulating, and when we make our escape, we do it with faculties erect and active, with every sense alert and eager for sights and sounds and all joys which are not to be met with in cities."

It was during the Dividend and Depression decades of the twenties and thirties that such escapes brought the most tingling pleasure. The truth is that, in those years, I seemed to have become a schizo personality, 50 per cent executive and factual, the other moiety literary and fanciful. There was a civil war in my innards for which I could negotiate no peace save when wading in the river with the fish, sharing their cold, sweet, silver life, becoming for bird and kine and native passer-by merely a harmless "feller in the creek."

Considering the temporal limitation, I am not ill content with the spatial expanse drained by the

streams I have fished. If a catalogue of ships, why not one of rivers?

In New York: the Upper Hudson, Gansevoort Creek, beloved of Herman Melville and his Pierre, and the Halfway Brook of my own first emprises; later the Ausable, the Esopus, Kinderhook Creek, the Willowemoc, the Beaverkill, the Neversink with Edward Hewitt performing prodigies of rolling casts, the Callicoon with George La Branche darting upstream like a swallow, creating artificial hatches, taking plump pounders from the most unpromising places.

In Massachusetts: the Konkapot, the Swift, and the three branches of the Westfield. In Connecticut: the Blackberry and the Eight Mile River, rising in that Devil's Hop Yard of Old Lyme where, in Colonial days, young men and maidens hopped in secret midnight dances, an American Witch Wood. In Rhode Island: Queens River, where Grant La Farge at seventy climbed to the top of a pine tree like a panther to detach his companion's fly from a reluctant cone.

In Vermont, where in all the winding valleys rail and road and river are braided together and tied at their nodes by covered bridges: the Walloomsac, West River, White River, Otter Creek, the Barton, the Nulhegin, and the Battenkill,

Strong without rage, without e'er flowing full.

In New Hampshire: the Pine, the Smith, the Baker, the Saco, the Wildcat, the Glen Ellis; Connor's River, where, on leaving the stream, I surprised an Arcadian idyl in full bloom under an apple tree; the stony Peabody, the terraced Connecticut, the loggy Androscoggin; the thin Mohawk, the Double Diamond, three Swifts, the Ammonoosuc, the Wild Ammonoosuc, the Upper Ammonoosuc, and the Beebe.

On the last, I had a part in the performance of a miracle of the fishes. One day a friend and I drove for five miles over the bumpy right of way of a lum-

Fisherman and philosopher, FERRIS GREENSLET, long the guiding genius of Houghton Mifflin Company, was responsible for the first wide success of such now familiar authors as Henry Adams, Willa Cather, and Amy Lowell. He is also the biographer of James Russell Lowell and Thomas Bailey Aldrich. It is fitting that this selection from his autobiography, *Under the Bridge: With Many Authors and a Few Fish*, should appear in the *Atlantic*, for it was as Associate Editor that he began his distinguished career.

ber railroad in process of construction, into the secret heart of the Sandwich range. After some hours of bushy fishing, we brought to net an iridescent monstrosity of a rainbow trout. Only thirteen inches long, he must have weighed well towards two pounds. Anyone beholding him would have said, with the slightly elevated gentleman in *Punch* swaying before an enormous stuffed trout in a glass case, "The man that caught that fish is a liar!"

On our way out to the car we saw, by the side of the trail, a rusty motorcycle, complete with sidecar. Hanging from the handle bars was a small fish basket; no fisherman in sight. In the basket, which we were moved to investigate, was an emaciated little trout the size of your middle finger, a good two inches under the limit. Throwing this into the bushes, we forced leviathan into its place in the basket, completely filling it. Some unknown Brother of the Angle has a tale to tell.

2

IN MAINE, I have fished the Cambridge, the Malloway, the Cupsuptic, Rapid River (a five-pounder to the little Iron Blue), Sandy River, Dead River, Moose River, Misere Stream (seventy-two in a week, averaging better than two pounds, all to the dry fly), Brassua Stream; the various branches of the Penobscot, the Sourdnahunk, the Narragaus, the Machias, the Denys; most often and, with the Connecticut, best loved of all, Kennebago Stream.

Along the twelve miles of that delightful water ran the abandoned line of a railway, over which a road bus with flanged wheels and miniature freight car behind for guides and rods and fish transported me in luxury, down in the morning, back at night. In the mid-thirties, the rails were taken up and sold to the Japanese, despite my warnings of their evil designs, to blow us up with. Thereafter, I have fished only as many of the thirty pools between the Falls and Indian Rock as I thought my legs would get me back from. The eighteenth pool, one of the loveliest, with the pyramid of Kennebago Mountain exactly on its upstream axis, is now called Drinkwater's Bath, from what happened to that agreeable poet when, contrary to the most explicit instructions from a more cautious adventurer, he endeavored to lengthen his cast by mounting a large stone known to be of the type that gathers no moss.

In North Carolina: the Nantahala and Hazel Run, high in the Great Smokies, where the feller in the creek had intimate conversations with fellow fishermen, white and colored. Florida rivers hardly count, but the fly-taking bass and spotted weakfish

of the St. Lucie, Anclote, and Homosassa are a pleasant memory.

In Ireland: the Blackwater, Awbeg, Araglin, North Bride, where Jim White, as the water rose over his waders, chanted "Here comes the Bride," and the Funshion, on which under the ruined walls of Glanworth, I, in a dinner jacket, having eaten and drunk deep of Irish hospitality, essayed to show a salmon fisher from home, who said he had never seen it done, how a trout was taken on a floating fly.

A bad mess I made of it, too, until dinner wore off; and between 11.00 and 11.15 p.m. in the late northern twilight, the priest was put to a brace of good trout. A mile or two on any river in the truly emerald isle will teach you more of Irish history than all the books. At every bend is a ruined tower. There lived large Irish families, with all their cousins, descendants of ancient kings that made merry wars and sad songs, and developed the fiery individualism that is their charm and their undoing.

In France: the Truyère, the Haute Loire at Goudet, where I arrived after a twenty-mile drive from Puy-de-Dôme with only one wader; and the green, translucent Tarn. In Canada, where also a fly is a *mouche* and the reel a *moulin*: the Batiscan, Rivière Noire, Jacques Cartier, Cassein, Rivière des Neiges, and Montmorency. In Anticosti, still in the same language, the Jupiter, the Bessie, the St. Marie, and the Canard.

En route to the last-named, I complained to the *gardien* of the snail's pace of the white stallion that was inching us along a boggy lumber road. Said the *gardien*, "You don't understand; this is the father of all the horses on the island." Said I, "Peut-être il est mieux pour l'amour que pour le voyage (Perhaps he's a great lover rather than a traveler)!" The steed laid his ears back and looked around with a mean expression. The *injure* rankled in his slow, equine mind. When we left the river with two satisfactory salmon and came to the ruined lumber camp where the conveyance had been left, there it was, but — no horse! Following the track of stately hoof-prints, I walked the nine miles to Port Menier in waders and the rain, resolved in the future to try to guard my tongue.

In England, the fly fisherman's terrestrial paradise, the fishing seems to get better with the stocking and preserving of the years, though it was noted in a monastery record of the twelfth century that it wasn't what it used to be. There the roll of the rivers fished includes the Barle, the Exe, the Colne, the Dart, the Evenlode, the Windrush, the Wye with Rafael Sabatini, the Tees with Harry Morritt of Rokeby, the Tay with John Buchan; Highlands of Scotland and Water Meadows of Hampshire.

There in weedy gin-clear waters, flowing over white beds of gravel, I saw that Shakespeare knew what he was talking about when he wrote, in *Much Ado*,

The pleasantest angling is to see the fish
Cut with her golden oars the silver stream.

Of these fourscore rivers, I remember not only the pools and runs but the best methods of approaching them and the actual lie of the fish. On nights when care-charming sleep will not be wooed to my bed, I count no silly sheep, but fish a mile or two of selected river, downstream wet or upstream dry, as suits my mood. Always I drop off, and sometimes finish out the stretch in sleep. But the fish we hook in dreams rarely reach the net.

There are other streams that I have only day-dreamed of fishing. Michigan's Père Marquette, Idaho's Northwest Snake, Oregon's Rogue, British Columbia's Kamloops; the rivers of Princess Charlotte Island, stiff with great free-rising Pacific salmon; the Scotch-like waters of Tasmania; the angler's paradise in the Chilean Andes; the Erste and Hex rivers of South Africa, advertised by John Buchan; New Zealand's Tongariro, mouth-filling name, in accord with the net-filling rainbows it produces.

I had hoped when Anno Domini had done her work, and purely publishing adventures swung full circle, to cast a fly on some of these distant waters. My purpose still holds to sail beyond the sunset after the war, but South Africa and Tasmania begin to look like Carcassonnnes.

How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnished, not to shine in use!

3

THE CHOICE of fishing companions is a deep matter. In camp, for bridge or dominoes in the evening, three are all right, but on the water one is enough, and, unless rating at least 90 on a scale of 100, too many. A wife or daughter, or what you have, who takes an intelligent interest in the proceedings, who appreciates your merit without emulation, and is not bored when you expound it to her, who likes fish to eat, is an excellent fellow traveler. Of your own sex, the ideal is someone who is not only keen and competent, but curious, reflective, well-read in the literature of the subject, who considers fishing not a competitive sport but a branch of philosophy, who takes as much pleasure in your fish as you do in his.

Of my own preferred companions, a majority have been surgeons or painters—neat-handed, individualistic, free-minded fellows, like Bob Greenough,

beau joueur at every outdoor and indoor sport, lord of the Seigneurie of Pertuis in the Laurentians, who fought the battle of public health against the cancer foe till his own untimely death. *Par excellence*, I'd choose Leslie Thompson, distinguished painter and fishing philosopher, master of the useful art of camouflaging quick thinking behind slow speech. I have fished, or discoursed of fishing, with the chief angling authorities of our time—Lord Grey, Sheringham, Skues, Hewitt, La Branche—but have known no more knowledgeable head and cunning hand than Lett Thompson's, no companion who so consistently doubles stream-side joys and halves the griefs.

Of guides and gillies, a book could be written. Two would deserve a chapter apiece: Jim O'Brien of the Kennebago, guide, philosopher, naturalist, stream strategist, friend; and Jack O'Brien of the Cork Blackwater, incomparable raconteur.

One day, during a mixed party of happy memory at Castle Hyde, near Fermoy, the men went for the day to some hopeful salmon water downstream. There Jack O'Brien, octogenarian, tall, ruddy-cheeked, taciturn, took us in charge. From the stratospherical point of view, Ireland is but a green speck in the Atlantic Ocean. So it is, too, from the meteorological, and we were having that day quite a spot of Atlantic weather. We worked downstream—three casts, three steps forward, three more casts, three steps forward, and so on *da capo*. I did it in three-four time, to the melody of "Casey would waltz with the strawberry blonde." At every step the rain in the back of my neck got colder. The seely salmon hugged the bottom where it was warm. It was a blank and chilling forenoon.

At lunchtime, the ladies of the party arrived on the dripping scene with a hamper. From it appeared a roast duck, a whole ham with fixings, two bottles of Burgundy, six of Bass, and one of John Jameson. As the last was handed out, I descried a dotted line straight to it from O'Brien's faded eye:—

"Would you like a drink, O'Brien?"

"I would, sir!"

Taking a water tumbler, he filled it seven-eighths full of the creature, put it down the hatch in two gulps, and became suddenly loquacious:—

"Sure and it's strange things that happen on this Blackwater River, and the strangest I ever seen was right by yon tree, in 1872, it was, in February. I was spinning for pike. I was casting it out and reeling it in, and casting it out and reeling it in, and of a sudden I heard the sound of the hunting horn. And I looked over there across the river, and round that little hill there I seen the fox coming, and after him the hounds, and the master, and the beautiful gentlemen and ladies on their big beautiful horses.

"And the fox he jumped in the river and started swimming this way, and the hounds after him, and the gentlemen and ladies wading their horses up there by the stickle.

"And the fox he got halfway across and then he sank from sight; and I said to meself, 'Alas, the fox, poor fellow, he's drowned!'

"And just then I felt a big pull on me spinning rig. A great pike it was that weighed forty-three pounds, and I played him up and I played him down, and at last I got the gaff into him, and I pulled him out on the bank and hit him three — no, 'twas four times, on the head with me priest.

"And I turned him over, and there was his belly bulging out like nothing you ever saw before. And I says to meself, 'Sure and it's funny the way that pike's belly sticks out,' and I took out me knife and slit him up the belly.

"And out jumps the fox, and he ran three miles before they killed him."

4

IT IS a far cry from an Irish fish story to the poetry of Wordsworth, but each year in August or September, after a summer of heat and stale air in town, on the Connecticut or Kennebec Stream I enjoy an experience that is pure Wordsworth. Lord Grey had it, too, in pursuit of the sea trout in Scotland, and set it down in words too perfect for paraphrase: —

The difference is so great in August, after a few days of exercise in the air of the North, that there come times when the angler, who wanders alone after sea trout down glens and over moors, has a sense of physical energy and strength beyond all his experience in ordinary life. Often after walking a mile or two on the way to the river, at a brisk pace, there comes upon one a feeling of "fitness," of being made of nothing but health and strength so perfect, that life need have no other end but to enjoy them. It is as though till that moment one had breathed with only a part of one's lungs, and as though now for the first time the whole lungs were filling with air. The pure act of breathing at such times seems glorious. People talk of being a child of nature, and moments such as these are the times when it is possible to feel so; to know the full joy of animal life — to desire nothing beyond. There are times when I have stood still for joy of it all, on my way through the wild freedom of a Highland moor, and felt the wind, and looked upon the mountains and water and light and sky, till I felt conscious only of the strength of a mighty current of life, which swept away all consciousness of self, and made me a part of all that I beheld.

The mood of the actual fishing is the same everywhere. It is always a restrained and muted fierce-

ness. It is in the casting of the fly, when a moment's languor is fatal — in the striking and playing of the fish. It is the source of numberless acts of unrecorded heroism, as when rheumatic old men deliberately go over their waders to cover a rising fish without drag. It is a fire in the heart that drives us on to one more pool long after we are thoroughly exhausted and reprehensibly late for supper. The Indians knew it as they cast their buck tails on virgin waters, and my great-uncle Charles, God rest him, who caught his death wading in the brook on his eightieth birthday, felt its propelling urge. In short, it is fishing.

And of fishing, the fly rod is the characteristic implement and perfect symbol. I have three, in especial, baptized in trout water with the names of the fathers and the mother of the church, Izaak, Sir Henry, Juliana. How their yielding resiliency typifies the character of the great men who have graced our annals, and of many a mute inglorious fisherman, too. What magical comfort comes on winter nights, when the world and its unreason have been too much with us, from the mere handling of their shining strength. When spring is not far behind and trout begin to cast an upward eye, and city-pent fishermen make strange passes with their walking sticks, it is my habit to set a bundle of three or four rods and a net handle in some conspicuous position where the eye will fall frequently on it. That precious roll is the emblem of a gentler fascism than the sons of Caesar have represented by their bundle of stolid staves. It stands for direct action presently to come, for memories of vanished days, and for enduring friendship with kindred minds, companions along the rivers of home and by streams beyond the once estranging sea.

And what of the River of Life, the springs whence it comes and the sea where it goes?

An English friend, G. E. M. Skues, has written a classic fishing book, *Minor Tactics of the Chalk Stream*. Minor tactics have their place on the turbid stream of consciousness, too. It is the little things that make up the good day. The scent of a country morning; a catbird's phrase; a line of verse or a page of prose; some small mirth-making incongruity, a happily found word for a quaint conceit; the warm presence of a friend, a responsive smile; the light of sun or moon or star; or, if the weather turns sour, the dash of rain in your face.

Nor is this the supine philosophy of a new beatitude. Minor tactics are active, not passive. They succeed only at the hands of the persistent and alert. As in fishing, languor is fatal.



THE HARPIES OF THE SHORE

by ANDRÉ MAUROIS

FROM THÉRÈSE TO ANTOINE

Évreux. October 7, 1932

Well, my dear, like the rest of the world I've been reading your book. Don't worry; I thought it very fine.

In your place I should now begin to wonder: "Does she think it is fair? Did it hurt her?" But of course these questions never even occur to you. You will be so sure not only of being just to me but of having tempered your justice with mercy. That paragraph about our marriage!

"So eager was I for the ideal woman, the help-mate and the mistress in one, perhaps I overlooked the real woman. I was sure that the first days of my life with Thérèse would unfold the vision I had expected, with a little of the unpredictable too. I was a plebeian and an artist; Thérèse was the great middle class with all its worthiness and all its weakness. She was faithful, forbearing — even brilliant, according to her lights. But alas, no one could have been less equipped for the lifelong struggle of a spiritual crusade."

Sure of that, Antoine? In spite of my parents, I gave in to your entreaties. We were married. Was that the start of your spiritual crusade? For me, certainly, it took a little courage. You were unknown then and your ideas of the world clashed with mine — frightened me even. I left a wealthy and united family to embark on the perilous journey of a lifetime. I didn't protest a year later when you told me you couldn't work in Paris and led me off to your own grim, empty corner of the

country. That frightened little maid we had was the only creature lonelier than I was. I accepted it all. For quite a while I even pretended to be happy.

But what woman could really be happy with you? I laugh now — bitterly, to be sure — when the papers harp upon your "strength," your "moral courage." Strength! Antoine, I have never met a man weaker than you. Not one, ever. I am not speaking in hatred. The time for that is gone, and since we parted I have found peace. But this is something you ought to be told. Your never ending tension, your phobia of people, even as you hungered for their praise, your childish fear of illness and death — those are not strength, even though the novels which are their fruit may fool your worshippers.

Two or three times in your life, I admit, you have stood up for a principle. But only after you had cold-bloodedly calculated its final acceptance by the world. A long time ago, in one of your rare moments of candor you made an admission: —

"As a writer ages," you told me, "his opinions ought to grow more and more radical. It's the only way to keep a hold on the new generations."

Little did your young idolators, so naïvely and frenziedly drunk on your *Messages*, suspect the synthetic passion, the satanic care, with which you had composed them.

You are not strong, not even healthy. Sorry to be cruel, but that has to be said. You were never a lover, Antoine, my dear. After we were divorced, I found the peace, the fullness of physical love, in those beautiful long nights when a woman sleeps fulfilled between the arms of a virile man. As long as I lived with you I saw only sorry mockeries, a few pitiful parodies of such love. I was too young and ignorant to miss it. I believed you when you said that an artist should sublimate his passion. But I should have liked to sleep beside you if only to keep

Distinguished biographer and novelist, ANDRÉ MAUROIS has for many years served as a liaison officer between the French world of letters and the English. Soon after the outbreak of war, Mr. Maurois came to this country, where he has been lecturing and writing. Recently he accepted a commission to serve with the French overseas. Of his many books, perhaps the best-known is *Ariel: The Life of Shelley*. His autobiography, *I Remember, I Remember*, appeared in 1942.

warm; if only to be granted a little tenderness, a little pity. But you slid from my arms, then my bed, then even my room, never guessing my despair.

You lived only for yourself and your reputation and that Byronic personality which so titillates your lady readers but which is not your own, *and you know it*. An adverse notice in the book reviews upset you more than the suffering of the woman who loved you. The only evenings you thought of me were when politicians or critics who mattered had promised to come for dinner. Then you wanted me to shine. A day ahead, you would forget your all-important work and lecture me half the day: what I should (or should not) say; which dish excited the palate of this senator, or which theory the enthusiasm of that doddering but important critic. On those evenings you wanted our household to seem Spartan, from principle, but our board Lucullan; because, after all, great men are only human.

Then Antoine, do you remember when you began to make money? Real money? You liked that because in the bottom of your heart you are a peasant, grasping for a square of earth; but at the same time you were a little embarrassed, because money has no place in your philosophy. I had to smile at those blindfolds which your greed bound over the eyes of your conscience. "I shall give almost all of it to the Cause," you used to say. Well, I handled the accounts, so I knew what you gave away and what you kept.

Sometimes, so ingenuously, I'd exclaim: "Why, Antoine, you are really getting very rich!"

Then you would sigh: "I hate the whole system, but as long as it exists, you have to adjust yourself to it."

As fighting the system was the fashion, the more you fought it the richer you became. What a cruel fate, my poor Antoine. Still, I must admit that where I was concerned you were impeccably orthodox. When you became a millionaire I did venture to hope, like all women deprived of love, for a few luxuries, for furs and jewels. Then, I admit, you denounced the Golden Calf with all your heart.

"A sable coat? Pearls?" you cried in horror. "Can't you see what my enemies would say if my wife grew into one of those bejeweled country-club wives whose caricatures have made me famous!"

I did see. I understood that the wife of Antoine Vence should be above suspicion. I acknowledged my indecency. To be sure, you had real estate and securities for playthings. But bank accounts are invisible, while diamonds sparkle in the accusing sun. As usual, Antoine, you were right.

So I resigned myself again to that and everything else; even this last book. All my friends praise the young, true, unflinching courage of its theories; its kindness (you are one of the few really mean human beings I have ever known); its generosity towards me. Either I don't answer or I agree: "Yes, he has been very fair, and I have no reason to complain." But am I right to play up to you? Is it wise to nurse this glittering legend of which you are the hero? Should youth be allowed to follow a man who I know is not a man? I ask, but have no answer. I shan't even write the expected but useless apologia, for you have made me disgusted with words.

Good-bye, Antoine.

FROM ANTOINE TO THÉRÈSE

Paris. October 15, 1932

Just like old times, your efforts to hurt me. Cheer up, you have succeeded.

Thérèse, you don't understand yourself. You are so invariably the victim — it's almost masochism. It took even me a long time to understand you. At first I accepted your version of the crushed violet, but little by little your cruelty and your deceit entrapped me. Just because the beauty of your sister and the vulgarity of your parents humiliated you in youth, you dedicate the rest of your life to avenging yourself on those unlucky enough to love you. When I met you, I had confidence in myself. You determined to undermine it, and assaulted it in my beliefs, in my soul, and in my body. You made me ridiculous in my own eyes. Even now that I am rid of you, I am ashamed to remember the secret wounds which your "candor" inflicted.

Your cold and implacable eye! "You are a small man," you would say, "very small."

True enough, I was short and, like most men who work with head instead of hand, had a little more fat than muscle. Was that a crime? Or even a defect? You never let me forget that it was at least something to laugh at. Love abhors constraint and distrust. When a couple strip off their clothes, they strip their fears, their tension, and their shame. Stretched out beside me, you were not a wife but a hostile judge, master of your senses, eyeing me with your cold clarity. Perfect love casteth out fear. How could I be the perfect man when I met in you, my mate, only constraint and prudery? You accuse me of avoiding your bed. Are you sure you didn't drive me out?

"For me, certainly," you write, "it took a little courage to marry you." But didn't you know at the beginning that I should soon rise from obscurity?

You had chosen me because you had found in me something real and alive, unknown in your own people. Perhaps a little because you felt you could wound me, and to wound is your dearest, your only delight. I can hardly remember what kind of man I was when I met you; but I believe I was unusual enough to have faith in my own ideas — no, I'm going to say "my genius."

You did all you could to kill that man. You murdered my happiness with pity. Strange thing! You had married me for my strength, and it was that very strength which you set yourself to destroy. But I must not look for logic or even design in your actions. Like so many women, you are the wretched slave of your nervous and sexual system; warped by an adolescent dream, furious at its failure. As long as you lived with your parents you poured out on them that liquid venom which you harbor; when I became your husband, you spat it upon me.

"A brand-new platform," you are thinking, "knocked together especially to answer my letter."

And you will proudly pass my book around, open at the passages you so carefully underlined. "My wife was faithful, forbearing, brilliant."

Take a grain of salt with this overgenerous recommendation. Now that I must use any weapon, as my back is to the wall, I confess that this sentence was a lie. I wanted the book to be sportsmanlike, but I was wrong. The least hypocrisy spoils any work of art. Bitterly, relentlessly, I should have exposed you as a monster, as the destroyer of my soul.

"Faithful?" Before we parted, I knew you were no longer so. Yet why should I blazon it in a public page, and give you at my expense the prestige of the adulteress? "Forbearing?" You have the devil's pride, and the passion to dominate and dazzle lies behind your every word and action. "Brilliant?" Yes, even now many people think you brilliant; in fact, you have become so. But do you know why? Because I formed you. Because for over twenty years you received from me everything you lacked: your thoughts, your knowledge, your very vocabulary. Today, after our long separation, you live by the breath I infused into you, and that letter by which you hoped to finish me off owes what vigor it has to me.

Am I vain? No, proud; though I need to repeat my self-belief, like a rosary, to break the spell of your evil. I shan't take up your letter point by point — it would play your game to torment myself in vain. But one more word. "I laugh now — bitterly, to be sure —" you write, "when the papers harp upon your strength. I have never met a man weaker than you."

Thérèse, you know quite well that you attack me there on two different scores which you pretend to confuse. That is not fair. What my character was in our own relations is between ourselves alone. I agree with you now that in that struggle I was too weak. Weak out of pity; and pity is not always untainted by cowardice. But you pretend not to know that a man can be weak in the affairs of the world and yet create power; that often, in fact, his work is vigorous because his life is weak. You may be sure, Thérèse, that what Youth sees in my work is really there.

And on second thought perhaps I ought humbly to thank you for the suffering you have caused. To your unwavering hatred I owe an enormous part of what I have accomplished.

Before everything you are a Destroyer. That is the form your rancor has taken. Because you are unhappy, you hate happiness. Because you are frigid, you scorn passion. Spite has made you a penetrating and mordant observer, like those X-rays which reveal in the steel the straw which threatens the beam's stability. You make unerringly for a man's vulnerable spot. You see straws in every triumph. A remarkable gift, Thérèse, but a curse. I own to those weaknesses which you so cruelly point out to me. You have seen clearly and well. But they are bound in a matrix so heavy, so tough, that no human strength can break it. You have shattered yourself against it, and my work and my soul have survived your sinister reign.

"But what woman," you write, "could really be happy with you?" I want you to know that I too have discovered love since we were divorced. At last, with a simple good wife I have found peace. I can see you smiling, "Yes, but what about her?" If you could see Sabine for a moment, you would not doubt her happiness. Not all women need, like you, to kill in order to live.

Whom are you killing now?

FROM SABINE TO THÉRÈSE

Paris, February 2, 1937

MY DEAR MADAME BERGER: —

You must be surprised to receive a letter from me. We are supposed to be enemies. I do not know how you feel; but I, far from hating, have a sort of unwilling sympathy for you. Long ago, at the time of your divorce, you may have been the adversary whom I had to drive at any cost from the heart of the man I had chosen. But after our marriage you soon became an invisible friend. Doubtless Bluebeard's wives, half-dead, often meet in the memory of their common husband. In spite of himself,

Antoine used to speak of you. I would try to picture you in company with that exacting and strange being, and often felt that your discipline had been a wiser prescription for him than my patience.

Since Antoine's death I have had to sort out his papers. I have found many of your letters among them. One in particular impressed me: the one you wrote him five years ago after the publication of his *Diary*, in which he mentioned you. I often told him that page would offend you and begged him to omit it. But that weakling was surprisingly obstinate — or bold, if you will — where his work was concerned. Your answer was cruel, but I must say I found it just. Are you surprised?

Please do not think I am betraying Antoine now that he is dead. I loved him; I am still loyal to him. But I know him and I cannot lie. As a writer he had the talent and the conscience of genius. But you were right about him as a man. Antoine was not a crusader; or at least, though he may have seemed so to his followers, he never fooled us who were his wives. He had always to surround his actions, his social theories, everything, with a halo of sanctity; but we know that the motives behind them may sometimes have been petty.

He made a virtue of his hatred for society, but we both know that the cause was his neurotic fear. Towards women he was a watchful and considerate comrade; but, as you wrote him, that was less real tenderness than weakness. He shunned acclaim, but because of pride and forethought rather than modesty. All in all, he never made a sacrifice without getting a reward, and we two were the victims of his affected crusades.

I truly believe, Madame, that he never knew his real nature; and that Antoine, so penetrating and so severe in judging others, died in the belief that he was honest.

Was I happy with him? Yes, in spite of so much disillusion, because he was an enormously interesting human being, with something always new to watch. The very double life I have just described made him a walking riddle. I never wearied of listening, asking, and watching. His weakness was most touching of all. In his last years, I grew to feel more like an indulgent mother than a woman in love.

Ah, well, if one loves a man, what matter how? Whenever he left me I cursed him. The moment he returned, I was his slave again. At least, he never knew my anguish. What could have been the use? I concluded that he would have hated any woman who unmasked him and forced him to the mirror, and that even then he would not believe what he saw there. After all, you yourself didn't attempt

this until after knowing you would never meet him again.

But what an impression you had left! After your divorce Antoine did nothing but rewrite the history of that separation with me at his elbow. You were his only heroine, the central figure of all his books. Again and again, under different names, I met in their pages your Florentine page haircut, your slow gestures, your aspiration, your aloof purity, and the hard brilliance of your eyes. He never portrayed my character or my person. He tried once or twice, to please me.

But, ah, if you knew what I endured each time to see the woman whom he modeled on me evolve in spite of her creator into a woman who was unmistakably yourself. One of his stories, "Sabine," he named for me, but who could help seeing that its remote and virginal heroine is you all over again? Many is the time I have cried as I copied out the chapters where you are first the mysterious Beloved, then the Wife, faithless but adored, then the Enemy, hateful and vile but still desired.

Yes, after you left him he lived on his memories, those evil memories you had left him. At first I tried to make him lead a calm and healthy life devoted wholly to his work. I wonder now if I was right. Perhaps a great artist ought to suffer. Perhaps monotony is worse for him than jealousy or hatred or suffering. I cannot deny that when Antoine and you were married he wrote the richest and most *human* of his books; that bereft of you he could do nothing but relive the last months of your marriage. Even the cruelty of your letter did not cure him of his passion. He spent his last years trying to answer it in his heart and in his books. His last book — unfinished; I have the manuscript here — is a sort of relentless confession in which he destroys himself in self-defense. Ah, Madame, I covet the coldness which could so awake him!

Why am I writing you this? Because I have so long wanted to say it. Because you alone, I believe, can understand it. And because my honesty will, I hope, induce you to do me a favor. You know that since Antoine's death a lot has been written about him. What they have said about his work is neither very accurate nor very profound, but I shall not correct it. Critics have the right to make mistakes. Posterity is the final critic, and I believe that Antoine, as a writer, is among the immortals. But I cannot be so casual when his biographers distort his character and his life. Only you and I, Madame, have really known their intimate details. After much hesitation I have decided that it is my duty to make our memories permanent.

So I am going to write a book on Antoine. I know

I haven't the talent, but this is a case where fact is more important than form. And at least I shall have made a start; some day, perhaps, a great historian will use it in the ultimate biography. For some months I have been trying to assemble all the information I need. But I am short on one period; the time of your engagement and marriage. It may be unconventional, or overbold, but at least I think it straightforward and loyal to come directly to you for help. Probably I should not have ventured this unless I had that curious but heartfelt sympathy for you which I mentioned at first. Though we have never met, I feel I know you better than anyone else. So won't you write me where and when I can meet you to explain my scheme?

No doubt it would take you a little time to find and sort out the old letters — if indeed you still have them; but at any event I should love to have a talk with you as soon as convenient. I want to tell you how I plan the book; you will see that I shall not be hard on you, or even one-sided. On the contrary, I promise to use every device I can in your favor. I know, of course, that you have built a new life, and shall be very careful not to quote or relate anything that might be awkward. Let me thank you in advance for what I am sure you are willing to do to make my task easier.

SABINE ANTOINE-VEUCE

P.S. This summer I am going to Uriage, where Antoine met you, so that I can describe from real life the background of your encounter on the terrace of the Hotel Stendhal. Then I should like to visit your parents' estate and make the acquaintance of your beautiful sister.

P.P.S. I haven't much on the affair of Antoine with Madame de Vaulges. Do you know more than I? He always spoke of you, but never about that youthful adventure. Is it true that he met Madame de Vaulges at Modane in 1907 and made a trip through Italy with her? Was Antoine's father's mother named Hortense or Mélanie?

FROM THÉRÈSE TO SABINE

Évreux. February 4, 1937

DEAR MADAME: —

To my great regret, I cannot be of the slightest help. In fact, I have decided to publish a life of Antoine Vence myself. You are of course his widow, bearing his name, so that a short volume of memories would be appropriate. But we must be frank with each other, Madame; so let us admit that you hardly knew Antoine. You married him at a time when he was already famous, when his public life

overshadowed his private. On the other hand he was mine during his formative years as a writer, when the legend was born; and you yourself were kind enough to admit that the best of his work was composed either with or in memory of me.

Besides which, no real life of Antoine could be written without the documents which I have: two thousand of his love (and hate) letters — not counting my answers, the best examples of which I have kept. For twenty years I cut out all clippings about him and his books, and classified them whether by his friends or by unknown admirers. I have all his speeches, his letters, his articles in the *Temps*. The Director of the Bibliothèque Nationale, who has just inventoried this treasure (for I plan to leave it to the nation), tells me: "It is an incomparable collection."

For instance, you ask me the first name of his grandmother from Bordeaux. I have a whole folder on this Hortense-Pauline-Mélanie Vence, as well as on all Antoine's forebears.

He loved to call himself a man of the people. That is not true. At the end of the eighteenth century the Vences owned a vineyard at Graves, small but excellent; and Antoine's maternal grandparents boasted a hundred hectares near Mérignac. In the time of Louis-Philippe his grandfather was mayor of his village. One of his great-uncles was a Jesuit priest. The Vences, though sturdy vintners, were bourgeois in a way, and I shall prove it. Not that I want to emphasize the reverse snobbishness which was one of poor Antoine's weaknesses. I shall be unbiased, even indulgent. But still I must be accurate. There, Madame, lay the most venial fault of the great man whom we two loved and judged.

Towards you I shall be no less kindly than you have generously proposed to be towards me. Why should we not be united? From letters which I have before me it is clear that you were Antoine's mistress before becoming his wife, but I shall not quote them. I abhor scandal for others as well as myself. Besides, however just my grievances against Antoine, I am still a faithful admirer of his genius and shall exalt it as best I can without thought of self. Possibly, since our two books will appear so closely together, it might be well if we exchanged our proofs, so as to avoid any contradictions for the critics to cavil at.

You know more than I about Antoine's last years, and his decline after his first stroke. That period of his life I leave to you. I shall end the book at the time we separated. Why bring up the quarrels which ensued? But in an epilogue I shall relate your marriage, then my own; and tell how I heard the news of Antoine's death when I happened to be in

America with my second husband. In a newsreel one day I saw flashed across the screen his last portrait, his state funeral, and a picture of yourself, Madame, coming down from a stand on the arm of the President of the Republic. It would be an apt end.

But I am sure your own little book will be delightful.

FROM SABINE TO THE PORTICO
PUBLISHING COMPANY

Paris, February 7, 1937

I have just learned that Madame Thérèse Berger (who was, as you know, my husband's first wife) is getting out a book of memoirs. To get ahead of her, we must publish as soon as possible. You will receive my manuscript July 15. I am glad to hear that options have already been requested in Brazil and the United States.

FROM THÉRÈSE TO SABINE

Évreux, December 9, 1937

MADAME:—

On top of the American success of my book (it was chosen by the Book-of-the-Month Club) I have just received from Hollywood two long cables on which I ought to consult you. An agent for one of the big producers suggests filming a life of Antoine Vence. You are aware that Antoine is widely read in the United States among the liberal and intellectual sets and that his *Messages* have become classics.

This popularity, and the almost crusading quality which the person of our husband has taken on, make the producer eager to give the film a stirring and noble character. At first, some of his conditions startled me. But on second thought I believe that no sacrifice will be too great for us if we can assure to Antoine that consecration with the public which in these days the movies alone can give. We both knew him well enough to be sure this would have been his own answer; and surely historical accuracy was the least of his worries when publicity was at stake. Here are the three most ticklish points:—

1. Hollywood insists that Antoine must be a man of the people, desperately poor, and wants to picture his early struggles in a tragic light. This is false, we know; but it is the reading which pleased Antoine and we cannot be more exacting than the hero.

2. Hollywood wants Antoine to take violent sides in the Dreyfus case, and to have risked his whole career for the captain. Historically this is wrong and chronologically impossible; but it couldn't harm his memory. Quite the contrary, in fact.

3. Finally, and this is hardest of all, Hollywood thinks it awkward to have two women in Antoine's

life. His first marriage having been for love (made specially romantic by my family's opposition), the strange creed of the cinema demands that it should be happy. Therefore the producer asks my permission to "fuse" the two into one. For the last of the film he would use the description in your book, but give me your personality at the time of Antoine's illness and death.

I can well picture your qualms, and in fact at first refused the last request. But the agent has cabled again with an unanswerable argument. The part of Madame Vence will, of course, be played by a star. Now no great luminary of the screen would agree to appear in a film if she had to disappear after the first reel. He gave me an instance: in *Mary Stuart*, to persuade a famous actor to take the part of Bothwell, they had to present him as the love of her youth. Idyllic but quite anachronistic. You must admit that if history can accommodate itself to the needs of the screen in such well-known events, it would ill become us to display a ridiculous pedantry in regard to our own humble lives.

I might add that (a) this composite wife would have neither your features nor mine, since the actress who would play us will be the one with whom the producer has a contract at this moment, and who resembles neither of us; and (b) the sum proposed is very high (sixty thousand dollars, or over a million francs at the present rate), and that, of course, if you accept the proposed versions, I should liberally reward the great help your book has given.

Please wire your answer, for I must cable Hollywood myself.

FROM SABINE TO THÉRÈSE

SUBJECT TOO IMPORTANT FOR CORRESPONDENCE.
TAKING TRAIN PARIS 2.23. ARRIVE ÉVREUX ABOUT
6.00. BEST REGARDS.

SABINE ANTOINE-VENCE

FROM THÉRÈSE TO SABINE

Évreux, August 1, 1938

Here I am again in this small cottage which you know and are kind enough to like. I am by myself as my husband is away for three weeks. Why don't you come down and make me a visit, for as long as you can? I should love it. You can read, write, or work, for I am so busy with my new book that I shall have to leave you to your own devices. Take my car whenever you want to tour the countryside. But in the evening, we can talk over our memories — and our business.

With love and best wishes,

THÉRÈSE BERGER

SYNTHETIC RUBBER TURNS THE CORNER

by HARLAND MANCHESTER

1

THE rubber shortage, the gravest material crisis this country has ever faced, is at last on the road to solution. Synthetic rubber has turned the corner. Big factories are rapidly coming into production, and already the first of the five million "GR-S" tires to be produced in 1943, concocted by chemists from petroleum and farm alcohol, have been released to essential civilian drivers.

This does not mean that we can leap into our cars and go joy-riding. It does not mean that the war of materials is over. Rigid economy in all rubber uses must still be observed. We are being saved by the skin of our teeth from a nation-wide paralysis of vital transportation, and from a stoppage of transport on battle fronts which might easily have lost us the war.

Only a miracle of research and production has saved the complacent American public from a fate which few fully realized and many have carelessly abetted. After the Japanese raided Pearl Harbor, the Far Eastern plantations which supplied 90 per cent of our rubber were suddenly lost to the enemy. Our very national existence was at the mercy of a dwindling stockpile — and the ingenuity of our technical men. Our production of all synthetic rubbers totaled a mere 12,000 tons a year — one fiftieth of our pre-war annual needs. A few synthetic rubber tires had been made, but large-scale production was only a gleam in the eyes of chemists and engineers.

To fill the gap in our industrial economy caused by Japan's conquests, every possible source of rubber, both natural and synthetic, has been exploited regardless of cost. Wild rubber has been rushed by plane from the Amazon, plantations still under Allied control have been double-tapped, scrap has been collected, and thousands of acres of latex-

bearing guayule shrubs and *Cryptostegia* vines have been planted in California and Latin America. But the major burden of the program falls upon synthetic rubber. Of the 308,000 tons of new rubber supplies which Mr. Jeffers is now able to predict for 1943, more than 82 per cent will come from the man-made rubbers.

This triumph of swift conversion has been accomplished in a number of ways. About a third of the butadiene gas upon which most of the new rubber is based is made from alcohol derived from farm products. The rest comes from petroleum, and the present and future of synthetic rubber depend largely upon the magic by which a fraction of crude oil is chemically cracked, cooked, tortured, and teased until it emerges at the end of the line as sheets of rubber hardly distinguishable from the product of the tree.

Forty-eight plants, many of them performing only one step in the entire program, are springing up all over the country, and in another twelve months they will be turning out more rubber than the country ever used in a peacetime year. A few of them are integrated plants, located near oil fields, where petroleum stored underground for centuries is drawn through a series of monstrous and complicated refining columns, reactors, and processing machines, and never sees the light of day until it emerges as rubber ready to ship to the tire factories.

One of the most spectacular of these continuous-process plants is located on a 1200-acre lot on the east bank of the Mississippi near Baton Rouge. It is a part of the great Standard Oil of Louisiana refineries where high-octane aviation fuel and toluene for TNT are also produced. Crude oil from three states is pumped to the network of grumbling metal towers and broken down into components from which it is possible to make anything from an automobile tire to a lady's evening gown.

For oil is composed of an infinite variety of hydrocarbon molecules. Chemists will draw you pictures

For years a close student of new industrial techniques, HARLAND MANCHESTER has written illuminating articles on Diesel engines, on the electric eye, and on the special gear which keeps our soldiers comfortable and in good health.

of them made up of "C's" and "H's" arranged in various patterns. Some molecules, with the carbon and hydrogen atoms rearranged, will make explosives, some will make plastics, some will improve the performance of an engine, and others form the basis of synthetic rubber.

The whole secret of making rubber out of oil is in juggling the "C's" and "H's" so that the right pattern eventually emerges. This sounds very simple, but so far the equipment needed for the rubber program has cost \$48,500,000 in the Baton Rouge plant alone.

2

THE visitor to Baton Rouge who traces the progress of oil into rubber sees some of the newest and most spectacular discoveries in operation. First the crude oil has to be cracked to yield a series of major components, which range all the way from heavy sludge at the bottom of a 150-foot steel tower to valuable light gases at the top. Among these gases is butylene, and the extraction of this gas from petroleum is the first step in rubber-making. An efficient new process which went into operation shortly after Pearl Harbor has increased the amount of butylene which can be obtained from each barrel of oil, thus contributing to the speed-up of the entire rubber program.

The next step of the oil-into-rubber process at Baton Rouge is the conversion of butylene into butadiene, one of the two staples of the new tire rubber. Butylene has two superfluous hydrogen atoms which have to be removed to make the rubber ingredient. (Butylene is represented by the symbol C_4H_8 , and butadiene is C_4H_6 .) There are a number of ways of making butadiene, but under the government program by far the largest amount will come from Standard's efficient new dehydrogenation process, which since early 1941 has been rushed from the glass-retort state to large-scale production. Its bewildering maze of pipes and containers exists for the sole purpose of removing the two unneeded atoms. In an attempt to illustrate the complexities of the task, R. E. Wilson of Pan American Petroleum put it this way:—

"Imagine a big hall with ten billion fleas in it. They send you in with a sledge hammer and a crowbar and tell you to knock off the right hind leg and the left front whisker of each flea — and then, when you've finished, to sort out all the fleas that you've maimed in the process."

When the colorless, invisible butadiene gas finally emerges in the great procession of processes, we are getting closer to the smell of rubber. That volatile

gas, which would vanish in the air if not confined, makes up three quarters of the tough, Buna S tire rubber that will soon be rolling on the highways. The other quarter is styrene, a liquid chemical made from coal or petroleum; its production raises no major difficulty.

Just across the fence from the new butadiene plant is the factory of the Copolymer Corporation, where the ingredients are mixed and the rubber actually made. Here the stream of material gradually evolves from a scientific witches' brew that one must take on faith, and there are peepholes through which the newborn rubber can be seen. Big vats called reactors are filled with water, soap, styrene, butadiene, and chemical "salt and pepper" and agitated by giant egg-beaters for sixteen hours or so, while the butadiene and styrene are encouraged to join hands in long chains to form the molecules of the Buna S tire rubber, otherwise known as "Government Rubber-S," or "GR-S."

A small part of the mixture always refuses to "jell" on its first trip through the reactor, and is separated and piped back to join the supply lines. The rest comes out as latex. The work of the rubber tree has at last been approximated, for this white, milky liquid is similar to the stuff that runs into the cup when a plantation tree is tapped. The latex is run into a coagulating vat with a little brine and acid and stirred by a paddle, and rubber particles appear in much the same way that butter globules are formed when cream is churned. The new rubber is carried on endless belts through a wringer which squeezes out the water, and through a hot drier; then it is pressed and baled for shipment to the tire and rubber goods plants.

Complicated as it is, the making of crude Buna S is only half the battle. It has been no easy task to fabricate it into tires. Not that Akron was caught flat-footed by the rubber famine: for years a number of tire company chemists had kept abreast of synthetic developments here and abroad.

Long before Pearl Harbor a number of tire and chemical companies experimented with synthetic rubber tires, and some were placed on the market. They did well in road tests and provided invaluable experience. There are rubber men who for years have been using various synthetic tires on their cars, with good results. It was not hard to make a few good tires that would stand up in service, but that is a long way from turning them out by the million in mass production.

Go to Akron and talk with a compounder in one of the big plants if you wish to hear of the trials of tire-making with synthetic rubber. The com-

pounder is the master chef who brews the mix from which the tires are made. He is the czar of tire-making. You see him in his shirtsleeves, cutting off a piece of rubber with his knife, smelling it, biting it, and stretching it. Then he looks either satisfied or worried. Laboratory tests give him a complete report on the sample, but a prodigious memory and a sixth sense born of years at his job often tell him whether the rubber will make a good tire.

Buna S turned this man's world upside down. It was deceptive. It seemed all right but it had a will of its own. Before the war the skilled compounder knew the habits of rubber from every spot on earth, and knew how to blend and treat it to make it behave. Using batteries of chemical tricks invented by research men, he had increased tire mileage about 400 per cent in two decades. He had begun to think that he knew his job; then came Pearl Harbor, and they gave him some stuff that wasn't rubber at all, but something like it, and told him to make tires from it on rubber machinery with men trained to work in rubber.

When treated like tree rubber, Buna S turned out to be so hard and unworkable that it took three times as long to make a tire. This rate of production would not fill the demand unless the industry tripled its number of tire machines, and with metals hard to get, that was out of the question. Buna S can be made with various characteristics, so the compounders demanded softer rubber. This meant some sacrifice of quality in the tire, but there had to be a compromise somewhere, as there is in almost every product. Another headache: natural rubber sticks to itself when layers are built up on the tire mold; Buna S does not. The problem was solved ingeniously by devising a semi-automatic machine which places a thin film of natural rubber cement between the plies. These examples are only a hint of the tribulations of the rubber chefs when their old reliable cookbooks became suddenly obsolete.

Company barriers were forgotten as the tire makers pooled their resources to meet the challenge of the new material. They are emerging victorious. Buna S passenger-car tires are now rolling off the lines in rapidly increasing numbers.

And how do the new tires stand up in service? To answer this question we do not have to depend on guesses and hopes. Thousands of Buna S passenger-car tires have been tested on roads flat and hilly, curved and straight, wet and dry, paved and unpaved, and there are fat notebooks full of figures showing their performance under all conditions. A look at the record shows both pluses and minuses. The new tires may outwear natural rubber at high speeds, but they often give somewhat poorer mileage

at low speeds. They are more brittle and chip more easily. They hold the road much better than natural rubber on wet pavements, but since water does not lubricate them, they wear out faster under those conditions.

Balance the books and you can safely say that the new tires are already nearly as good as those made from tree rubber. In fact, the average passenger-car driver will hardly know the difference between the new tires and the old. The difference in wear will be less than he now notices between his rear right tire and his front left one, and he will have less trouble with skidding.

The making of heavy-duty tires for trucks and buses is a more difficult problem, and the whole industry is working toward a solution. Buna S builds up more internal heat than tree rubber, and the bigger the tire the hotter it gets, with greater danger of fabric failure. This heat problem is being partially solved by using a special rayon in place of cotton cord to reinforce the tires. Rayon is stronger than cotton, especially when hot. By strengthening the tire structure, it reduces the amount of rubber needed, thus making thinner walls which carry off the heat faster, adding thousands of miles to the life of the tire.

Recent experiments indicate that nylon cords may make the big tires still lighter and cooler in operation. This weight-saving is especially important in the tires of military planes, where every pound saved increases range or load. At present, about 30 per cent of natural rubber is being used in heavy-duty tires. With much of the drain on our stockpile and imports being relieved by synthetics, this compromise will keep the big vehicles rolling until the war is won or the fast-working research men solve the heat problem.

3

RAPID as the advance has been, chemists have barely scratched the surface in synthetic rubber research. When war came, three hundred different rubber substitutes were known to them. Buna S seemed to be the most logical material for tires, and became the bulwark of the government program, but thousands of possibilities in this one synthetic remain to be explored. By varying formulas and processes, it can be made as soft as molasses or as hard as a plank, and a wide variation of other qualities can be built into it. Multiply this research program by three hundred, and bear in mind the limitless opportunities still latent in the hydrocarbon molecule, and it is easy to believe that man-made rubber will eventually be tailored to fill any need.

Spectacular progress has already been made in making synthetics for hundreds of special jobs which natural rubber cannot do at all, or cannot do so well. Perbunan, or Buna N, was a miserable failure when the Germans tried to make tires from it, but it has other virtues which have saved the lives of many airmen. Oil does not rot it the way it does natural rubber, and that makes it just the thing for lining the new airplane tanks which do not lose their fuel when punctured with bullets.

Two kinds of rubber are used in these tanks: an inner lining which resists oil, and a sandwich filling which sponges up quickly and fills the bullet holes when the escaping gasoline strikes it. The construction is so effective that many planes have come safely home with their tanks riddled like sieves but only a few drops of fuel lost. Another merit of Perbunan — built into it by chemists — is that it remains flexible in the coldest weather. So it has a thousand and one uses for planes operating in the Arctic or in frigid high altitudes, where fuel connections and other rubber parts must withstand temperatures of 60 below.

Back in 1937 two young chemists named William J. Sparks and Robert M. Thomas spent a Saturday half-holiday in their laboratory at Bayway, New Jersey, and discovered the key to Butyl rubber, one of the most promising of the synthetics now being manufactured under the government program. It does not wear so well in tires as Buna S, but research men have discovered that it holds air much longer. The result: better gas masks, better barrage balloons and life rafts, and a promise of inner tubes that will have to be inflated only twice a year.

Nor should Butyl be dismissed as a future tire rubber. Tested on highways three years ago, Butyl tires ran only 5000 miles or so. Then the compounders tried out thousands of recipes, and in recent road tests some of the tires covered 25,000 miles at 40 miles an hour, with some rubber left on the treads. Because of the need of concentrating on a definite program, Butyl tires have been shelved for the duration, but if research men keep on improving them, they may eventually compete with Buna S.

For Butyl can be made more quickly and cheaply. It is made directly from isobutylene cracked from petroleum, by-passing some of the expensive and time-consuming steps necessary in making Buna S. For this reason, some experts are predicting that Butyl may sell cheaply enough to enable it to wage a stiff battle even with rubber from the tree.

Another important place in the government rubber program is held by du Pont's neoprene, which

is made from acetylene obtained from coal. Neoprene is the oldest and in many ways the aristocrat of American synthetic rubbers. First-class tires were made from it years ago, but its cost of production has barred it from the mass-production tire field. It can be made highly resistant to oil, sunlight, age, and below-zero weather. It has many war uses where quality is paramount.

For example, when today's fast, acrobatic fighting planes were in the blueprint stage, a new floatless carburetor was needed to make upside-down flying safer. The carburetor could not be made until the designers found a material for a gasoline-resistant diaphragm that would remain flexible and could be turned out uniformly with a thickness of a thousandth of an inch. A fabric coated with neoprene served the purpose as nothing else would.

And neoprene withstands the fierce sunlight of high altitudes so well that it is used to coat the rubber de-icers on airplane wings. The war curtailed production of neoprene waterproof garments, boots and shoes, hot-water bottles, tennis balls, and dozens of other peacetime products. Tests indicate that neoprene washers for household water faucets will last for a generation without a drip, and this accomplishment by itself should assure a brilliant future.

There are also a number of new synthetic materials — "stretchable plastics," they might be called — which are easing the shortage by doing many important jobs tree rubber used to do. One of these is the Monsanto Chemical Company's Saflex, once used in safety windshields and now used to waterproof army raincoats. Another is Koroseal, developed by Dr. Waldo Semon of the B. F. Goodrich Company. It is made by another of those mystifying processes in which a formless gas is turned into a liquid, then into a powder, and finally emerges as tough, flexible stuff with some of the properties of rubber. Electrical insulation is now one of its most important wartime uses. Unlike natural rubber, it is not inflammable, so it is widely used in insulating wires in naval vessels. In case of a direct hit, fire will not follow the wires.

Plastics of this sort are no mere rubber savers. They are being groomed for many post-war uses which rubber was never equal to. For example, flexible pipes made from the new plastics are being used in industry, and may be used in the house of the future.

An accidental discovery made by a man who knew what he was about ushered in Thiokol, a chemical rubber with invaluable war uses. In the twenties, Dr. Joseph C. Patrick of Kansas City, a medical man turned industrial chemist, was trying to make

an anti-freeze solution from ethylene gas, then a waste by-product of oil-refining. One of his mixtures thickened when he thought it should not, and the result was Thiokol, which the Dow Chemical Company is now manufacturing for the Thiokol Corporation.

Thiokol is inexpensive and gasoline does not rot it — two facts which have boomed its production. Since 1940, the Navy has built a number of vast underground storage tanks to hold lubricating oil and high-octane aviation fuel. In anticipation of a steel shortage, it was planned to construct the great caverns of concrete. But aviation fuel depreciates in octane rating through contact with concrete, and there is some seepage through the walls. So the tanks were lined with large black sheets of Thiokol, which were cemented like wallpaper to walls, floors, and columns.

Now portable "gas stations" made of Thiokol, holding up to 10,000 gallons of fuel or oil, are set up in a few minutes on foreign shores as soon as the troops land. Great supporting tubs of canvas reinforced with wood slats are staked to the ground, and inner bladders of Thiokol hold the fuel.

4

NO MATTER how cheap and plentiful tree rubber may become in the future, it is clear that many of these man-made varieties designed for special purposes have come to stay. In a few short years they have been adapted to tasks from which natural rubber is barred forever, and it is fair to assume that they will be greatly improved.

The future of the Buna S plants in competition with natural rubber is another matter. As a general rule, synthetic products become better and cheaper with the years, and it is reasonable to believe that Buna S will follow the same trend — that the tires will do as well as those of tree rubber, at a cost that will not be prohibitive. In other words, we have shown Japan that we can get along without the rubber plantations which she has seized — permanently if necessary. But we are fighting for an open world market, among other things, and we can conceive of no peace settlement which does not include unrestricted access to the products of the Far East.

With the law of supply and demand in operation once more, an annual crop of a million or more tons of natural rubber will be looking for buyers. Despite mad fluctuations in the price of this rubber for the last two decades, many experts agree that under pre-war conditions it could be delivered in New

York for 10 cents a pound at a good profit. By way of comparison, Mr. Jeffers suggests 8 to 15 cents as a possible future price for Buna S. Figures like these point to a close race.

But rubber scientists have not limited their work to synthetics — they have also been improving the rubber tree. Twenty years ago, a yield of 230 pounds of rubber per acre was considered good; by 1940 the better plantations were yielding 600 pounds, and there are acres of "prima donnas" which are producing 1500 and even 2000 pounds a year. Firestone has constantly increased its plantings in Liberia, getting high yields and cutting the sea haulage by 7600 miles.

In South and Central America, Goodyear, the United Fruit Company, and the Department of Agriculture are conducting experimental plantations to combat the leaf disease and pave the way for the re-establishment of the rubber tree in its original home. Inexpensive equipment has been devised for the "family-size" rubber plantation which would give the small farmer a supplementary cash income like that of the Vermonter with his maple sugar lot, and would stimulate post-war trade with our neighbors to the South.

All signs point toward a greatly increased production of natural rubber after the war. Harried tire workers would be delighted to return to their old familiar material; and in view of the industry's record, we may expect far better tires of natural rubber than we have yet seen.

This would by no means sound the death knell of the new synthetic rubber industry. Ever since Charles Goodyear learned how to vulcanize rubber in 1839, its use has doubled with every decade. The war has brought a bumper crop of new applications. In many war vehicles, the twisting of rubber cylinders mounted near the axles takes up road shock, supplanting metal springs. These may be adapted to automobiles. Sanitary Airfoam cushions, used in tanks and planes, may make big inroads in the mattress field. Inexpensive rugs and carpets with the nap fixed in a rubber base are waiting only for the victory. Conveyers of endless rubberized belts now carry minerals for many miles from mine to factory, and even rubber-surfaced streets have been proposed.

Synthetic rubbers will be adaptable to many of the new uses, and even if the tire turns again to the tree, a big market for the new rubbers appears certain. In addition, the new industry should serve two vital national purposes: it should establish a price ceiling for natural rubber to curb the rapaciousness of plantation barons, and it should act as permanent insurance that American wheels will keep turning.

THE ALWAYS READY CLUB

by GRETCHEN FINLETTER

1

SOME thirty years ago at Miss Spence's School, a teacher announced a plan which she said must last us our lifetime and through all the trials and ordeals that would come to us. The teacher was Miss Bovée, who taught a subject known as Elocution. Her demand was that even if her pupils were faced by a major operation, a war, or a proposal of marriage, — much gigglings from the little girls, — they must be able, as members of Miss Bovée's Always Ready Club, should the surgeon, general, or lover cry "Recite!" to give immediately three poems without a single mistake, and *with expression*.

Miss Bovée was completely successful. I do not believe that I or any of the other girls in her classes have ever forgotten our three recitations, and under strange circumstances they rise to our lips, with expression.

The school of some three hundred girls had Elocution once a week, in classes of eight, for forty-five minutes. We were required to learn a minimum of sixteen lines a week and our range of selection was extremely limited. The Schooner *Hesperus* was sunk some eighty times a term, a hundred more reciters brought the good news from Ghent to Aix, a further group made Abou Ben Adhem's tribe increase, or went Up the airy mountain, Down the rushy glen, with "The Fairies."

There must have been more interesting or modern verse but we did not know of it. We were bound by a purple book called *The Silver Treasury*, with five illustrations. After putting mustaches on the ladies' faces and scratching the name of our favorite college along the sides of the book, we settled down to a long career of recitations.

Miss Bovée sat at the end of a table with her

classbook open in front of her, where all could see what marks were given. The pupil's name was called and, standing at the end of the room and facing Miss Bovée and her leering classmates, she recited. Miss Bovée closed her eyes, her lips moved silently, her facial expression changed constantly while she emphasized moods with a toss of her head.

At the conclusion, the trouble began. Miss Bovée would pick out the two most important lines and ask to have them repeated. Then she would stand up and give them herself the right way and shot with dramatics.

To the new pupil it was horrifying. She realized that to get a good mark she would have to be a damn fool; and even if she were willing to take that painful step, she did not understand the technique.

So Miss Bovée explained the "one, two, three." This meant that before the great line of the poem the pupil was to pause and to count "one, two, three," and then give it everything. In "Abou Ben Adhem," the angel writes Abou's request.

"The Angel wrote, and vanished. The next night
It came again with a great wakening light,
And showed the names whom love of God had blessed,
And lo! [one, two, three] Ben Adhem's name led all the
rest."

The "one, two, three" was at first given audibly and it was always a great struggle to say it silently, and quite impossible not to move the lips.

Miss Bovée broke down self-consciousness. She insisted on varied voices and much expression, but we were never allowed to invent our own. It must be as complete an imitation of her style as possible. "The Wreck of the *Hesperus*" was her great favorite. It gave rare opportunity for a deep and a high voice in the unhappy dialogue between the father and his little daughter, and it was full of "one, two, three's."

GRETCHEN FINLETTER is the daughter of Walter Damrosch. With her three sisters she grew up in New York City in an atmosphere dominated by rehearsals and performances of music. At present she lives in Washington, where her husband is Special Assistant to the Secretary of State.

"O father! I see a gleaming light,

Oh say, what may it be?"

But the father answered never a word,

[one, two, three] A frozen corpse was he.

.....

"Then the maiden clasped her hands and prayed

That saved she might be;

And she thought [one, two, three] of Christ, who stilled
the wave,

On the Lake of Galilee."

2

A RECITATION which we all learned and for which Miss Bovée had a profound admiration was a poem by Ralph Waldo Emerson about the mountain and the squirrel. It was nineteen lines long and became a basic "must" of the Always Ready members. It contained many problems.

The first was the pronunciation of the word "squirrel." As a little animal that skips up and down trees, it remained a normal squirrel, but when it had its famous and victorious argument with the mountain, it became a "squ-i-rrr-il" — and woe to the girl who did not roll it out and add an extra dot or two to the *i*'s.

The next demand was deeply embarrassing. When the squirrel spoke, we must resemble a squirrel. This was to be accomplished with merry eyes and an extremely roguish manner. We balked. Could we suggest it in another way — say, by simulating nuts in our cheeks? No, we must twinkle. This was an unhappy period and the nearest I remember to mutiny. But teachers are powerful. With sulky expressions we figuratively waved our tails. Says the squ-i-rrr-il: —

"If I cannot carry forests on my back,

Neither can you [one, two, three, *twinkle, dimple,*
and with great archness] crack a nut!"

There was a deep rivalry between Miss Spence, the principal of the school, and Miss Bovée over Shakespeare. Miss Spence owned Shakespeare. She had an enormous class once a week, where she read us the plays and we learned the more famous speeches.

The classes were held in the Assembly Room. We sat on camp chairs in long rows, each of us having a clothbound copy of the play. Miss Spence stood high above us on a platform, reading and acting and having, I always felt, the time of her life. With her there were no closed eyes, no silently moving lips. She flung herself into the parts, she loved the drunken scenes full of bad puns, but like Miss Bovée she insisted that what we learned must be

given in an exact copy of her style. At a certain moment we would be made to recite some passage in unison with identical inflection.

Miss Spence was particularly fond of *The Merchant of Venice*. For some reason which was never made clear to us, she insisted that in the opening line of Portia's great speech in the courtroom scene, the voice should rise at least an octave on the word "strained."

"The quality of mercy is not strained,

It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven

Upon the place beneath."

It was not just a slight lifting of the voice: it was an enormous vocal jump. The effect of ninety girls together making this very unnatural sound never disturbed her and she would lead us like an orchestra with a swoop of her arm.

In Shylock's speech we let ourselves go and fairly shrieked, "You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog!" but quickly Miss Spence raised her hand. The dog, like the squirrel, had become a different animal. He was no longer a friendly Dawg: he was forever a Dahk.

Miss Spence wore voluminous, bright-colored silk dresses which had a peculiar and penetrating rustle. I have never heard a dress since that could give quite the same crackle and hiss. For us the sound was a signal.

Miss Spence often showed the parents of prospective pupils through the school. Once she brought a visiting father and a mother into the elocution class. Miss Bovée had unfortunately been poaching on Miss Spence's territory and had been bootlegging us some Shakespeare. The decision had to be made quickly whether to bury Caesar Miss Spence's way or Miss Bovée's. We were flustered by our audience but we were loyal to Miss Bovée.

"As Caesar loved me, I weep for him; as he was fortunate, I rejoice at it; as he was valiant, I honor him; but, as he was ambitious, I slew him."

Miss Bovée felt Brutus had killed regretfully, and our voices became hushed for "slew." Miss Spence listened to two girls, but it was like a red rag to her. She stood up herself and hurled out: "But, as he was ambitious, I *slew* him!" And there was no doubt that Brutus was delighted.

Miss Bovée thanked Miss Spence and Miss Spence swished out, followed by the startled parents, who apparently were not aware of how swords had crossed. But we left Brutus for the rest of the period, and Miss Bovée after a quick blow of her nose asked for volunteers of the Always Ready Club, and her closed eyelids were pink.

3

AT THIS time E. H. Sothern and Julia Marlowe were giving a cycle of Shakespeare at the Empire Theatre and we were all encouraged to go. We knew the plays so well that we had a sense of authorship. But when Sothern and Marlowe diverged from the interpretation of the school, we were unanimous that they were wrong. One mannerism of Sothern's, however, impressed me deeply: he never said "my"; he said "meh."

"Signior Antonio, many a time and oft
In the Rialto you have rated meh
About meh moneys and meh usances."

This seemed to me fascinating and daring, and I was determined, in spite of Miss Bovée, that I would never say "my" again.

The fact that Sothern and Marlowe were married was romantic to us, and we used to search through their grease paint for some glint of the deep love that we knew must be burning between them. Sothern was a very dirty old Shylock with matted beard and sunken eyes, and Julia Marlowe a particularly Vassar-like Portia, and they met only once in the courtroom scene, but several girls would always claim that there had been a moment when Shylock had looked at Portia in a "married" sort of way.

I was never convinced of this phenomenon, but when they took their rather stately curtain calls together, first to the right, then to the left, then to the top balcony, and then to each other, surely at that moment there was a mild, connubial glow. That was the moment when all Miss Spence's pupils broke into their wildest applause.

At that time actors and actresses were mysterious and remote and no magazine ever divulged their weight, their love affairs, or how they did their manicures. But the interest in them was just as deep, and we assumed that as they were in their parts, so must they be in their private lives. Half the school worshiped Maude Adams. It was known then as a crush, but the joys of this jelly-like state were much enhanced if they were shared by a dozen others.

I belonged to a smaller and more organized group who loved William Gillette. He was then playing *Secret Service, Held by the Enemy*, and his great role of Sherlock Holmes. The advantage of the Gillette circle, as opposed to the Maude Adams party, lay largely in the fact that William Gillette was a man. Little girls of nine and ten adored Maude Adams. It was silly. To shiver over Sherlock Holmes in his

silk dressing gown when he cried, "Quick, Watson, the needle!" and then bared his arm and stuck the hypodermic into the upper wrist, and then gazed out over the audience with that, oh, so tired look — that was a moment of mature experience in one's life. It made the Peter Pan goings on mere childish falderal.

We like him best in his dusty uniform of the Union officer in *Secret Service*; in his smoking jacket; wearing his cap with the visor at each end; in his dressing gown; or as he looked when he lit his pipe. Many were the girls who at home of an evening wandered about the rooms in striped wrappers, holding imaginary pipes between their clenched teeth as they looked out wearily into the night solving little crimes.

But we were humble and we were timid. It would not have occurred to us to wait at the stage door to see William Gillette leave the theater. Instead we combined on a second-tier stage box where, if we hung far out, we could see him standing in the wings before his entrance. There was revealed to each of us in turn, by changing seats rather noisily, not Holmes, the detective, but Gillette, the man. He was equally wonderful. He looked just as tired, just as misunderstood, and just as full of dope as when he was on the stage.

We were convinced he was a real drug fiend, and in the wonderful daydreams that we wove we forced him to give up the terrible morphine. And then came the great scene when he thanked one for having rescued him. Somehow he shed the dressing gown, was in a dusty uniform, and lo, it was a beautiful love scene.

"But I am too old for you."

"No — no —"

It ended in a vague mist and we began all over again. It was very, very silly and we were very, very happy.

Admiration for Gillette affected our elocution badly, for Gillette had a dry, almost monotonous voice admirably suited to the great Holmes but somehow lacking in the timbre necessary for Robert Browning. I would recite: —

"That's meh last Duchess painted on the wall"

in an ancient and weary voice and with no expression. My marks shot down but I would not give in. I felt I was at last an actress creating a role.

This summer the Office of Civilian Defense held one of its many air-raid rehearsals in which a shock feeding unit of which I was a member was asked to make a special test for speed, with all equipment. At the first wail of the siren, the group was to rush

to a certain fire department and make coffee and revive the wounded firemen while doctors and first-aiders tended the other injured.

A Red Cross captain who had been sent to time us kept her eyes on her wrist watch and gave us all a real sense of panic. Four large firemen stretched themselves out on tables and cried out that they were in great agony and only a drink could save them. A little lady, a new member of the shock feeders, hidden by a too large helmet, feverishly started stirring the pot, which looked like an oversized garbage can. In it was suspended the coffee in a gauze bag surrounded by gallons of tepid water.

An elderly canteener of many courses and little

experience proffered a great deal of advice. "You should have heated the water first in small quantities," she insisted.

"You've been eighteen minutes already!" announced the Red Cross captain.

"Hurry up, girls, we're bleeding to death!" yelled the firemen.

The lady, who had been murmuring some incantation at the great pot, now turned furiously.

"If I cannot carry forests on my back,
Neither can you [one, two, and three] crack a nut!"

The water suddenly boiled. An unknown alumna of the Always Ready Club had survived a crisis.



THE MAKING OF YESTERDAY

The Diary of Raoul de Roussy de Sales

FEBRUARY 2, 1942. — I haven't written anything in this diary for the last month or more because of various personal reasons: health mainly, and then the necessity for finishing my book. But there are other reasons for my neglect. First, the feeling that always comes over anyone who tries to write a diary: that nothing is more fruitless, more superfluous. Secondly, laziness and boredom.

I am convinced that Hitler has got the best of me, or is about to, by means of a weapon I had not foreseen: sheer boredom. This war and everything connected with it bores me. Hitler bores me. The state of mind that predominates all over the world bores me. Books, newspapers, and conversations that can speak of nothing but the war bore me — and make everything else tiresome. Hitler has conquered through dissension, terror, and confusion, counting

on the inertia, the ignorance, and the stupidity of mankind. But he has another weapon: the yawn. The day will come when the whole world will yawn, and on that day the war will be lost.

Public morale here is not very good on the whole. Tremendous efforts have been made to exploit the Pearl Harbor attack ("Remember Pearl Harbor," etc.), but the public seems to have sunk back into apathy. There is a kind of excitement or enthusiasm over the idea of having to undergo various privations (automobiles, rubber, frigidaires, sugar), but these privations haven't materialized as yet. People are entertained and exhilarated by the prospect, but eating dry bread is not so entertaining as the idea of eating it.

In theory, people are aware of the effort that must be made, but no one seems able to realize this in figures. My doctor asked me, "How long will the war last?" I answered him, "Perhaps ten, perhaps five years." He was startled, did not believe me, found the idea frightening.

March 15. Tucson, Arizona. — Here for a T.B. cure. In this isolated region, the echoes of war are stifled. The local papers are bad, the radio worse. In spite of this, the feeling that the war is going badly manages to penetrate, but it doesn't mean much. It's all too far away.

Yesterday Washington admitted that a naval

As the American representative of *Paris-Soir* and Havas, RAOUL DE ROUSSY DE SALES had a unique opportunity to survey our American scene, our thoughts, and our emotions in the crucial years before the war. With the collapse of France his work as a correspondent ceased, but he continued to set down in his journals the observations and the philosophy which mark him as one of the most discerning analysts of our time. This is the third of four installments.

The entire *Diary*, which has been translated from the French by Theodore R. Jaekel, will appear in book form under the imprint of Reynal and Hitchcock, Inc. *Atlantic* readers will remember Mr. de Sales's brilliant volume, *The Making of Tomorrow*, which was published shortly before his death.

disaster was suffered the other day north of Java. Thirteen Allied ships were sunk, of which several were cruisers. Japanese losses were not comparable. That battle didn't prevent the Japs from taking Java. Apparently, they're now preparing to isolate Australia. I don't see how they can be stopped.

March 20. — I have never listened to the radio so much. In this part of the country, the time given to the war news and to commentators is kept to a bare minimum. The programs consist mostly of the big commercial programs from New York and Hollywood, the comics, and plays. The inanity of it all is overpowering. The monotony and stupidity are incredible. Obviously it has an attraction, if I can judge by my nurse, an average young girl who is clearly very much interested in it. At the top of all her interests are the Hollywood stars, the radio stars. Everything else, the war for instance, forms a rather vague background.

April 6. — Herbert Agar arrived here yesterday. He told me, "When America herself understands why she's fighting the war, it will be time enough to tell others."

As he'd just finished a lecture tour, I asked him what he thought of the national morale. "People are bored with the war," he said. "They don't understand what it's about, consider it an unfortunate accident." In Washington, said Herbert, the government's idea is to let the public find out for itself the meaning of the war and what it wishes to do. A dangerous procedure, I say. France died without having understood a thing about it.

I have read *America's Strategy in World Politics*, by N. J. Spykman, a treatise on American geopolitics based on the German model.

April 8. — In Spykman's book, there is not one mention of France except in the past tense. The same conclusion can be drawn from most of the books or articles appearing today which talk of the world of the future. Whatever happens, France is considered finished, relegated to the level of Spain or even lower. My private opinion is the same. I don't think that France, even if she rises again, will in my lifetime regain the position she once had. She is no longer one of the great powers. Without being too chauvinistic about it, I find it difficult to get used to this thought, especially for intellectual and cultural reasons.

Paris, for instance, can never be replaced. There is no other conceivable world capital, unless a world be envisioned that is completely indifferent to what Paris symbolized (which is possible: a return to a

kind of barbarism). Meanwhile, it will soon be two years that Paris has been inaccessible, swallowed up in a German Europe, annihilated. That such a city can disappear like this is astounding. But such are the facts. And yet it didn't make much of an impression. The world goes on its way deprived of Paris and France, unaware as yet of the strange and staggering void thus left.

April 18. — The news from France is still obscure. It seems that Pétain remains Chief of State, but with a less important role, similar to that of President of the Republic. Laval has taken the ministries of Foreign Affairs and the Interior, Darlan that of National Defense.

The reaction here is what could be expected. Leahy has been recalled, but an attaché will be left in Vichy, together with some consuls. The press is naturally making a violent attack on Laval and is beginning to gush about Pétain. My own opinion has not altered: Laval and Pétain are cause and effect. I prefer Laval, who has the advantage of never having concealed his point of view beneath the hypocrisy and slyness of Pétain.

April 20. — F.D.R. has thought up a name for the war: "The War for Survival." It isn't brilliant. People can't tear themselves away from the negative idea of defense.

In *The Education of Henry Adams*, I read the following, written in 1905: "Paris still felt a subtle flattery in the thought that the last great tragedy of gods and men would surely happen there, while no one could conceive of its happening at Bayreuth or would care if it did."

Concerning Henry Adams and his education: To be disillusioned, bitter, or even skeptical does not suit the American temperament. Henry Adams succeeds in giving the impression of something monstrous in his desire to picture himself as a failure. His bitterness has no vigor, his skepticism no lightness. Intellectual rickets, as irritating as it is affected.

May 6. — Corregidor has fallen with its garrison of 7000 men. China is now encircled, cut off from outside supplies. Can she hold out? The impression in so-called informed circles is one of doubt. The way to India is equally open. Gandhi's point of view still prevails. India will oppose the Japs with non-resistance and non-coöperation. That will do India a lot of good.

The Madagascar battle is going on. Diégo-Suarez is still holding out, and London announces that the operation may last several days. Vichy

speaks of heroic defense, and Pétain congratulates the defenders. Is this going to be Syria all over again? Queer that in this war the French fight convincingly only against themselves or against the British.

May 25. — De Gaulle's mission is to defend the French Empire and restore it to France after the war, intact. The thought does not occur to the French that they, at least right now, are hardly in a position to reclaim anything. Nor will they admit, undoubtedly not having thought about it, that the end of the war will probably mark the finish of empires, and that this is even one of its aims.

It's amazing to think that so many Frenchmen and even Americans find it perfectly natural to talk about the British Empire as gone forever and at the same time to promise the French that theirs will be restored.

May 29. — The greatest disaster that could be imagined, outside of a sudden German victory, would be for the war to come to an end tomorrow, even with the defeat of Germany. People have never been so little prepared to make peace. Never have there been fewer ideas on the subject. Everything is in a state of flux, but the commotion is all underground and has not yet appeared on the surface. Even in England, which is two years ahead of this country, I doubt whether the people are capable of expressing their desires for a post-war world.

Over here, people are in the wishful-thinking stage. On the one hand there are those who dream about I don't know what kind of political and moral Americanization of the planet, and on the other those who are beginning to campaign for a return to isolationism and a new Harding. Once again, America doesn't realize that she must *pay* her way (I'm speaking of moral and political concessions as well as economic concessions). She can conceive only of isolationism or of the world's adapting itself to her views. It's the same conception as in 1918 with the added aggravation that at least in 1918 Wilson brought over the idea of the League of Nations, together with principles that held a certain world-wide attraction.

Even from the simple economic standpoint (and the Americans involuntarily still think as businessmen), peace at this time would lead to the most unimaginable disasters. It may be that, if the war lasts long enough, certain adaptations will be made and people will be better conditioned to accept the inevitable post-war hardships and discipline. But at present we are too close to the ideas of liberalism and laissez-faire and not yet sufficiently accustomed

to certain new values (such as price control, a managed economy, necessary planning). Peace tomorrow would be a great misfortune.

June 2. — Welles's speech the other day is obviously an important one. As the war goes on, its aims become clearer. They are still rather confused, but Welles's speech is a forward step. It emphasized the fact that the peoples of the entire world are to be liberated (in the last war the application of Wilson's principles was confined to Europe). This means that the problem of racial equality will be in the forefront. There will be no more exclusion of Asiatics and Negroes, at least in theory.

In addition, acknowledgment is made of the necessity for armed control over the aggressors for a fixed period, and consequently of the responsibility of their leaders and those who supported them. It is not clear just to what lengths this responsibility will be carried. A long period of reconstruction is foreseen in which the United States will take the initiative. This will give an opportunity to experiment in the field of economic equality. No more imperialism, said Welles — which means what? Will empires really be abolished, or limited, or modified? That remains to be seen.

June 3. — It's interesting to see in the various German publications and in the press a certain amount of anxiety about the fate of Germany after the war. All the anti-Hitler Germans, as well as numerous Americans, are already becoming soft-hearted or alarmed about the future sufferings that may be inflicted on the Germans.

The question of responsibility and of punishment is bothering a number of people. The dilemma is as follows: everyone agrees that the Nazis must be condemned and punished (if possible), but since the Nazis are Germans, how can the chaff be separated from the wheat? The theory is that the Germans were the first victims of the Nazis, in the same category as the conquered peoples, and therefore that they should be liberated and treated gently.

The flaw in this theory is that, as soon as the war is over and the time has come to mete out justice, all the Nazis will disappear. The Allies will be confronted by the good German people, crucified, maltreated, betrayed, and so on.

June 5. — Molotoff has been in Washington for the last few days. It's supposed to be a secret, but the fact that I know it proves it isn't airtight. The papers, however, are not letting a peep out, not even by allusion. I'm told that the Russians and British have reached an agreement, that they have even

signed a twenty-year accord. But here there is friction. The Russians are dead set on recovering the Baltic states and a part of Finland.

Public opinion in America will have a hard time swallowing this form of Russian imperialism. People are still sentimental, especially about Finland. Nevertheless, I think the Allies will have to yield to the Russian demands, for the Russians are strong right now and have already proved that their foreign policy is not dictated by sentiment. There's always the risk that if they're not satisfied they'll make peace with Hitler.

June 12. — Molotoff's visit, his trip to London, and the results of that visit have been made public. The British, with a realistic look toward the future, have lined up with the Russians, not only for the war but for afterward. They're picking up a new ally on the Continent to replace France. As the price of this alliance, they have undoubtedly conceded to the Russians the Baltic states, Bessarabia, part of Finland, and probably a good slice of Poland. The clause about not seeking territorial aggrandizement is merely a piece of camouflage. It refers to the 1941 frontiers, not those of 1939. But the point is left in doubt because of British and, especially, American feelings. Washington cannot subscribe to the disappearance of small nations.

Thus, if the war should end tomorrow in a German defeat, the policing of Europe would be taken over by Great Britain and Russia. It's the first time in history that Russia plays such a major part while France disappears from the scene.

An attempt is being made over here to persuade people that the Russians have given up their territorial claims (to the Baltic, for example) under American pressure. Raymond Gram Swing said this last night, and Arthur Krock writes it this morning. These uncertain speculations are going to lead to some disagreeable surprises on the day of reckoning.

There's no getting away from the balance of powers. This one is unprecedented.

It's worth noting that, in their arrangements with the Russians, the British are protecting themselves as far as possible against the possible defection of the United States. Their agreement concerns Europe, and theoretically the terms are applicable even without the United States.

June 16. — People are beginning to give thought to the question of the German people's responsibility in this war and to what must be done with them after the war. Up till now they have been trying, more or less consciously, to avoid it. They

have accepted the general theory, put forward by the British government at the start of the war, that the Allies were fighting the Nazis and not the German people, who were considered innocent and, indeed, the first victims of the tyrants. This theory is still more or less the official one.

Here the same thesis has been officially adopted. Henry Wallace and Sumner Welles have both expressed the theory that the innocent must not suffer on account of the guilty. Sumner Welles said that not only the responsible leaders must be punished but also the responsible groups (which is rather an elastic definition). In spite of these variants, all the Allied governments appear to be in agreement on the principle that there must be no reprisals against the German people as a whole.

Public opinion apparently agrees with this point of view, as shown by the Gallup Poll, which is approximately the same as that made in England. Today the Americans are thinking the same things that the British were thinking in September, 1939. Only 6 per cent believe the German people to be the enemy, and 79 per cent consider the Nazi government responsible. But the British precedent is interesting, since in November, 1940, the responsibility was pretty nearly evenly distributed between the Germans and their leaders.

The general public and especially its leaders (church, educational) are certainly opposed to the idea of inflicting reprisals on the Germans after the war. This idea of vengeance is un-American, and it will be very difficult to convince the Americans that, entirely apart from vengeance, giving the Germans a taste of war's hardships may be the only means of restraining them for a while.

The curious thing is that this softheartedness toward the Germans is not in evidence with regard to the Japanese. In an article on Japan, published in *Harper's* (June), Nathaniel Peffer writes the following: —

"Japan must be not only defeated but crushed. . . . The Japanese for more than a generation have been making war as a kind of lark, an agreeable adventure. . . . For Japan the adventure closes with martial celebrations and emotional satisfaction. . . . If Japanese militarism is to be checked, the Japanese must be brought to realize that war exacts a terrible price. This they can learn only when its ruins are left on their own soil as an ever present reminder of the cost of recklessness. It is not sufficient therefore to break the Japanese armies wherever they have invaded; it is necessary to carry the war to Japan, to destroy its principal cities and its whole industrial mechanism."

I doubt that anyone will write accusing Peffer

of inhumanity and blind passion. There are no Japanese-Americans in a position to raise their voices in favor of their compatriots. But all Peffer says applies to Germany, too, and yet people don't tolerate the idea of razing German cities or of indiscriminately punishing the German population to make them lose their taste for war and the Prussian spirit (samurai).

Those who suggest some sort of retribution want to leave it in the hands of the Czechs, the Poles, the Greeks, the French — while the Americans and even the British step gracefully aside. The theory is that only the actually conquered peoples will wish to take vengeance on their oppressors, thus relieving the noble Anglo-Saxons of the dirty work considered necessary.

This suggestion is not very pleasant. It's a fine example of puritanism and hypocrisy. But it's even worse than that, for it's an escape. The question is not whether there is to be vengeance on the Germans or on which Germans, but how to prevent the Germans from starting a new war in another twenty years or less. This is a practical problem for the psychologist, the politician, and the historian. Neither emotional nor even moral considerations must be allowed to interfere.

If the conclusion should be reached that every German must be massacred and that this is practical, then it must certainly be done. If, on the other hand, it should be decided that the only means of satisfying them is a total amnesty, then everything must be forgotten. The blessing that would result from finding a solution to the problem of the German soul is worth every sacrifice. And I don't say this out of fondness for the German soul.

June 18. — Pétain has made another speech which seems to be as startling as its predecessors, judging from the extracts. This masochistic attitude is beyond comprehension. There is something about Pétain (and perhaps all the French) that now completely escapes me. His maudlin defeatism certainly stands for something real in France, made up of fear, of cowardice, of an almost religious need for expiation, of flagellation, of logical despair.

June 24. — In spite of the panic that has shaken the country since the Tobruk disaster, people are still reading a great deal about the future peace. There are several schools and a number of sub-schools. It would be an interesting though difficult job to try to classify them. First of all, there are two large groups which may be called the Idealists or Utopians and the Positivists or Realists.

The Idealists. — They believe in progress, in per-

fecting society, in the fundamental goodness of Man. They derive partly from the Gospel, partly from Rousseau, or — in the American fashion — from both at the same time. This group includes Roosevelt and the New Dealers.

In it may also be included people like Dorothy Thompson, Herbert Agar, and other reformers.

The Positivists. — There are two large subdivisions: the simple conservatives or reactionaries, — such as the Old Guard Republicans, Herbert Hoover, Big Business, — and the neo-Nazis.

The latter are perhaps not very numerous as yet, but they are violent and arrogant. They derive from Machiavelli (or what they believe to be Machiavelli) and, without admitting it, from the German school (Haushofer, Ribbentrop). They include people like N. J. Spykman (*America's Strategy in World Politics*) and Burnham (*The Managerial Revolution*). Stuart Chase, although he is probably quite unaware of it, belongs to this group in certain respects.

Their chief characteristic is fatalism. Burnham, for instance, clearly predicts the future world. This war will result in the creation of three super-states, those that will control the centers of world industrial production: Northwest Europe (Germany), North America (the United States), and Asia (Japan). These three super-states will make war on each other after this one is over, in order to gain possession of the rest of the world.

This school of writers and thinkers is willfully and aggressively dogmatic, proceeding by categorical assertions, doubtless to show that it is unencumbered either by philosophical doubts or by sentiment. I can see that it will flourish in America.

June 27. — It's better to read history than to live it. People who find it "thrilling" to be living in this age are victims of a strange delusion.

What is clear, however, is the great difficulty one has in not succumbing to the surrounding stupidity. I think the commentaries, in the papers as on the radio, are getting worse every day. The papers are slightly better off. Walter Lippmann, for instance, maintains a certain intellectual level. But he's an exception. Most of the others are going around like wooden horses on a merry-go-round, to the accompaniment of the same old tunes.

Every time I listen to the radio I can't help feeling that the war is going to be lost, or at any rate that there is no more reason to win it. The mixture of advertisements with the news, the idiotic popular programs, the good humor or syrupy charm of the announcers, give rise to a feeling of demoralization that affects me in spite of myself. I'm sure that

anything would be better than this system, that it's absolutely impossible to go on with the war and still keep to the principle of sponsored broadcasts. Let me pick an example at random. At 11.00 p.m., CBS gives a quarter hour of news; the program is sponsored by Socony Oil — quite an inoffensive product, as a matter of fact. It begins with a few seconds of noise supposed to represent a galloping horse drawing near (The Flying Red Horse is the trade-mark of this oil). Then the announcer comes on and says something in the name of "your Socony dealer."

Then the news, read by the same unidentified announcer in the same tone of voice — encouraging, velvety, caressing, like a warm vermouth. After about seven minutes, he goes back to a plug for the Socony dealer, in which a connection with the war is established (take good care of your car to preserve your tires, increase your mileage, and so on), then he returns to the news once more. "And now the baseball scores." (This part affects me more perhaps than all the rest. There is nothing that conflicts with war so much as sport.)

July 3. — The battle in the desert is raging. Nothing definite is known. It is worthy of note that in Egypt proper — that is, in Cairo and that area — people are still leading a normal existence, just as in Singapore on the eve of the Japanese occupation. The population is passive or resigned or completely fatalistic. The attitude of the Egyptians, who are threatened with falling under Nazi slavery within a few days, gives a good idea of what the crusade for the Common Man is worth. The Common Man, with all due respect to Wallace, doesn't give a damn, any more than he has all his life.

July 7. — I've never been particularly bullish about the war or, especially, about the better world that will follow. A bird in hand is worth two in the bush, and so far as I am concerned I can't imagine a better world than the one I have known. Obviously, that isn't true for everyone. But what someone, I don't remember who, has called "the fatal optimism" of the times, especially in America, is a philosophy that eventually degenerates into general stupidity. But if I have never shared the optimism and confidence of this elite to which I am supposed to belong, I have never been so conscious as I am now of a disintegration of that confidence and of that optimism.

Deep down inside of me, I am terribly fearful America may be preparing for a "betrayal" that will be even worse than her defection in 1920. But this time it may be that religious scruples will force this

country to assume the responsibilities it shirked twenty years ago. America will consider it her duty to look after the world. But she won't do it without exacting payment, not in a material but in a moral sense: no other country is so convinced of being right, so arrogant in her moral superiority. If she takes a hand in world affairs, it will be to impose her own principles, and she will regard her intervention as a blessing for lost and suffering mankind.

I know that there is danger in everything and that the world must choose between various dangers. The American danger is the least appalling. I prefer Henry Wallace to Rosenberg, Dorothy Thompson to Goebbels, Henry Luce to Himmler, and even, if necessary, Hoover to Göring; but a world dominated by the present American leaders is a fearful thought (and I haven't mentioned either the churches or the universities, notorious hornets' nests).

July 17. — Sometimes I wonder why I persist in going on with this diary. Obviously it can't be published, and its interest is probably limited. There might have been a reason for it at a time when I was leading a more active life. Now I'm the complete onlooker, my state of health itself being an excuse from as well as an obstacle to playing any active part. There is also my indolence, to which I must in all fairness render homage and which has undoubtedly had a hand in the situation. In two years, ten years, fifty years, of what importance will be the reflections of a man whom circumstances have forced to live on the fringe of things in an era where nothing but action counts?

July 18. — Gandhi has announced that India must be given complete independence immediately or he will launch a passive disobedience movement. His argument is that India will only defend herself when she has become a free nation. Gandhi has taken over the vocabulary of the democracies. He's shoving his Common Man to the fore. But none of this sounds very sincere. Gandhi's just trying a little blackmail, that's all.

Some people are getting sentimental about India, especially in England and here. For my part, I've never felt any attraction or even interest for that land. Neither the art, both tortuous and spiritless, nor the religion nor the philosophy of India has ever aroused my curiosity. This is obviously weakness on my part, a bias. I think of India and the Hindus as a sort of putrefied appendage dangling from the body of Europe and Asia, something unhealthy and in a state of ferment from which nothing ever results.

July 24. — Cordell Hull made a speech on the radio last night, the importance of which had been stressed. In actual fact, the speech was completely insipid; Hull spoke of the post-war world and again trotted out his ideas about the creation of an international economic system based on good will, and so on. Barely three sentences about the present situation. Either through fatigue or ignorance, Hull doesn't seem to understand that the world (including the Americans themselves) expects everything from America except this kind of sermon. Hull doesn't fully appreciate there's a war on, or at least not enough for the knowledge to disturb his obstinate dream which failed so long ago. "The nations of the world have only to conclude decent economic agreements for them to live happily together." This is just about the limit of his philosophy. It's the "virtuous materialism" of which Tocqueville speaks.

Finished *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon*. It's the second time I've read the book this year. I wanted to see whether a number of first impressions were correct. I am more than satisfied. This book is one of the eight or ten books I've read that have had a lasting influence on me. I also think that Rebecca West's book is the only really important book that has been written in the last ten years, or perhaps twenty.

It's worth noting that the critics and the "intellectuals" in general haven't done what they should have for this book. Perhaps their admiration, sincere as it is, is not great enough for them to ignore the patent absurdity of extolling a book which, whatever they do, will never be read by more than a few thousand people and will be really understood by only a few hundred.

Not that the book is "difficult," but it's long and explores such a vast territory — the whole field of European history and culture — that it requires too much concentration. This country reads a great many books of 1200 pages, but they must be either inanities like *Gone with the Wind* or spurious masterpieces like *For Whom the Bell Tolls*.

Rebecca West's discovery furnishes the only plausible explanation for the apparent mysteries of our age. The myths of the falcon and lamb will be considered by many to be literary or poetic interpretations referring to contemporary defeatism, to that suicidal vertigo which seems to have taken possession of the Western peoples. But this explanation is much truer than all the political, economic, and social analyses that are now fashionable and that mean nothing. For instance, in my book I tried to analyze the nature of contemporary pacifism and defeatism, but Rebecca West provides a much truer explanation. To take an example, the

extraordinary phenomenon of Pétain can only be explained by the spirit of Kossovo and the sadistic obsession of sacrifice.

Rebecca West illuminates certain aspects of Christianity that reveal the dual character, sublime and odious, of this system of thought.

Figures like Constantine and Gerda illuminate this period. Constantine, the civilized man, is a type that could still occasionally be encountered in Europe — not very frequently, it is true. The fact that he was a Jew is important. He's a kind of Serbian Charles Swann. Gerda is Germany.

I thought it astonishing that a woman could have written a book like this. But I see that only a woman could have written it. That "lunacy" about which she speaks is necessary to get to the heart of things. The book is powerfully centered upon the author, violently and courageously so — faithfully subjective, as only a woman could dare to be in treating of such topics.

July 25. — I've had a letter from Dorothy Thompson. "The trouble with urging people to fight for survival is that they do not believe it," she writes. "Only the people in the South know what it means to lose a war. They know that it means what Rebecca West knows it means." Speaking of Rebecca, she is surprised that the so-called intellectuals are taking a greater interest in Hoover's objectionable book. The answer is that in America, as formerly in France, the intellectuals have a kind of deep servility, all the more dangerous because it is concealed under a pretense of frankness and independence.

August 1. — I have read *Germany and the Next War* by F. von Bernhardi, a book published in 1911 which caused quite a sensation in its day. It's not fashionable today to delve into German authors of this species to find proof of the continuity of what has dominated German thought for at least a hundred and fifty years. People prefer to believe that Hitler is a kind of monster, born of the poisoned swamps of Versailles, and that he forced his deplorable doctrines down the throat of an innocent Germany. They still cling to the idea, at least in America, that the Allies are fighting Hitler and not the Germans.

This view makes it unnecessary to entertain disagreeable thoughts. But, although Bernhardi, Treitschke, *et al.*, obviously don't speak for all Germans, one cannot help observing that it was the writings of these men which triumphed in Germany. Bernhardi's book, written before the last war, might just as well have been written in 1921. It contains

most of the ideas in *Mein Kampf*, and the entire Nazi philosophy is potentially there.

August 5. — The British have published a document signed by Gandhi which they seized last May from the records of the All-India Congress and in which Gandhi mentioned Indian independence as a means of negotiating with the Japanese. Gandhi has not denied the authenticity of the document, and Nehru explains that Gandhi believes in a Japanese and German victory.

Gandhi is another worshiper of Rebecca West's Black Lamb. Since blood must be spilled and sacrifices made, he prefers to be on the side of the victim rather than the executioner. Gandhi is in the same boat with the Czar Lazar, Neville Chamberlain, and Pétain. They have a natural inclination toward defeat, a taste for massacre.

I wonder whether Gandhi's "defeatism" is indigenous, the result of Western influence, or both. Gandhi exploits anti-imperialism with the zeal of an American clubwoman. He is against the British Empire and rants about it as though it were proved once and for all that the world has never known such a scourge. "Better the Japs than the British" is the twin of "Better Hitler than Blum."

This Indian business is another symptom of the universal revolt against Western philosophy. Like Hitler, Gandhi would destroy democracy with democracy's own weapons. By basing her argument on Western ideals (the right of peoples to self-determination, nationalism, anti-imperialism, and so forth), India will make her contribution to the collapse of the Western world.

It is beginning to come out that the weakness of democracy (and by that I mean the entire ideological and material structure in which we are supposed to be living) lies in the fact that it has never existed. For a long time, at least a hundred and fifty years, we have been living in the belief that the People was sovereign, and that we had found a government through which it could express its will.

In actual fact, democracy does not exist anywhere, even here. The party system and the electoral machinery in America are a continual negation of democracy. We cling desperately to the idea that the People cannot be wrong and we have proclaimed the divinity of the Common Man, but these are pitiful subterfuges. What the masses really want is a ruler or, if need be, a tyrant.

The history of the various Western nations (France and England in particular) proves that it

has not been the masses who have overthrown tyrants — executed Charles I or Louis XVI — but organized minorities, new (or old) elites who for a while were able to give the impression that they were representing the People — that is, God.

Democracy, in the philosophically ideal form expressed by men like Wilson, has never been a world force. In practice, it has led to the Mass Man, to Hitler or Gandhi.

August 7. — Nothing is more difficult to analyze clearly than the American attitude toward religious questions, and in particular toward Christianity. I confess that after ten years of residence over here I am still unable to make head or tail out of this problem. Religion, Christianity, takes on a political aspect here, or rather politics is flavored with Christianity. The alliance is a historical one. The Puritans, who confounded the ideas of crime and of sin, are at the bottom of this business; but so is all of Protestantism, which is not a religion but a conception of life. I don't know whether or not Americans are *believers*. It's far and away the most unpopular topic of conversation with them. They are obviously afraid of it and prefer to let the question remain in a nebulous state. In reality, whenever Americans talk about their mission in the world, they express themselves in religious terms. In their opinion, America is an essentially Christian nation with a Christian destiny, and the fact that all this is extremely vague has no effect on this attitude.

Last night Quincy Howe, who has for some time been taking over Elmer Davis's job as commentator for CBS, said: "How can a great warrior like Churchill be expected to get on with a great saint like Gandhi?" The whole tone of his commentary showed that in the present dispute his sympathies lay with India. The two questions that come immediately to mind are the following: Why is Gandhi a saint? But, assuming that he is, which is more important: to beatify Gandhi or to win the war?

Discussing the same subject this morning, the *New York Times* does a beautiful job of sitting on the fence. The British may not be entirely in the wrong, but on the other hand they are not completely right, and so forth. Whether the British are in the right or in the wrong about this matter, it seems to me that the first duty of their allies, the Americans, is to support them all the way. Gandhi may be a saint, but so far as the war is concerned, he is certainly a rebel or a traitor.

(To be continued)

HERMAN MELVILLE

by CLIFTON FADIMAN

1

SOME twenty-odd years ago, on May 18, 1921, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, then eighty, in a letter to his lifelong friend, Sir Frederick Pollock, wrote: "Did I mention *Moby Dick*, by Herman Melville? I remember him in my youth. It seemed to me a great book — as ten years later may some of George Borrow's things, possibly influenced by him — but I should think a much greater man. It shook me up a good deal. It is wonderful already that a book published in 1851 doesn't seem thin, now. Hawthorne did when last I read *The Scarlet Letter*. Not so *Moby Dick*."

Holmes, a man given to wide and impartial decisions, made no judicial error here. By common consent — but, interestingly enough, a consent given only during the last two decades — *Moby Dick* is one of the great books of the world. It does not "seem thin, now" any more than in 1921 it seemed thin to the lucky Balboas and Columbuses who then rediscovered its Pacific rhythms and Atlantic rages.

A minor proof of its greatness lies in the circumstance (always true of masterpieces) that, while there seems nothing new to say about it, we are forever trying our hands at further commentary. In the case of a minor work, no matter how interesting, critics sooner or later, happily, have their say, the river of annotation dribbles off, and the position of the work is more or less firmly established. But men and women will always attempt the seemingly impossible task of writing something new about Shakespeare and Dante — and Melville. That is, of course, because the meaning of a good minor work is

clear and single while the meaning of a great major work is multiplex.

The greatest books rise from a profound level of wonder and terror, a level common to all humanity in all times and climes, but a level so deep that we are only at times aware of it. From time to time a man — Cervantes or Dostoevski or Melville — lets down into this deep well the glorious, pitiful bucket of his genius, and he brings up a book, and then we read it, and dimly we perceive its source, and know that source to be something profound and permanent in the human imagination.

The mysterious liquid drawn from this well is never crystalline. Rather does each man, looking into it, see mirrored a different set of images, reflections, points of light, and layers of shadow. All great books are symbolical myths, overlaid like palimpsests with the meanings that men at various times assign to them.

Moby Dick is a book about Evil. Melville, with his characteristic irony, said of it, "I have written a wicked book and feel as spotless as the lamb." At no time in his life was Melville ever notably happy, but at thirty-two, when he sat down to the composition of his masterpiece, he was notably miserable, a sick, worried, and unhappily married man. Some of the poison of his personal life was undoubtedly discharged, veiled in symbols, into the book. But if this were the only impulse behind *Moby Dick*, it would be but a subjective work of the second order, like *Childe Harold*. Melville's despair was metaphysical as well as personal; his awareness of evil goes beyond his own constricted circumstances. His book is not a lament but a vision.

Yet we must not lose ourselves in generalities, but remember always the kind of man Melville was — a magnificent Gloomy Gus, unquestionably ill at ease in his time and place, a romantic metaphysician whose affinities were with the Elizabethans rather than with his perky nineteenth-century contempo-

Well known as a writer and lecturer, and as book critic of the *New Yorker*, CLIFTON FADIMAN is even better known as the master of ceremonies on the radio program, "Information Please." In this illuminating essay, which will serve as an introduction to the new Heritage Press edition of *Moby Dick*, he lights up the surface and shadows of Melville's great — and often difficult — novel.

aries. He was by nature a solitary — not a half-and-half solitary like Thoreau, but a simon-pure one, akin to a Thebaïd ascetic. It must have been hard to live with Melville. Perhaps such men as he should be excused from the amenities of ordinary intercourse.

He was not a “literary man” in the sleek professional sense. His work was forced out of him; it is a kind of overflow of his vast interior silence. “Seldom have I known any profound being that had anything to say to this world, unless forced to stammer out something by way of getting a living.” Again he says, “This whole book is but a draught — nay, but the draught of a draught.”

A pessimism as profound as Melville’s, if it is not pathological, — and his is not, — can exist only in a man who, whatever his gifts, does not possess that of humor. There is much pessimism in Shakespeare but with it goes a certain sweetness, a kind of radiance. His bad men — Macbeth, Iago — may be irretrievable, but the world itself is not irretrievable. This sense of balance comes from the fact that Shakespeare has humor, even in the plays of his later period. Melville had none. For proof, reread Chapter 100, a labored, shrill, and inept attempt at laughter. Perhaps I should qualify these strictures, for there is a kind of vast, grinning, unjolly, sardonic humor in him at times — Ishmael’s first encounter with Queequeg is an example. But this humor is bilious, not sanguine, and has no power to uplift the heart.

I said that *Moby Dick* was a book about Evil; and so it is. It is the nearest thing we have to an un-Christian (though not an anti-Christian) epic. It is the other face of the Divine Comedy — the product of unfaith, as Dante’s epic was the product of faith. But to believe in Evil’s reality is not to espouse it. Melville is as far removed from a pure champion of evil, like Hitler, as he is from a pure champion of good, like St. Francis. Ahab knows that Good exists in the world, he even has his own moments of softening of the heart, but basically he is mesmerized by what is negative and disastrous. He cannot turn his mind away from *Moby Dick*.

2

THE relationship between Ahab and the White Whale forms the central line of the story. Superficially this relationship is the same as that which animates any number of bloody Elizabethan tragedies of revenge. Ahab’s leg has been torn off by *Moby Dick*; therefore he hates the whale; he pursues it to the death and is dragged down, in the very

middle of his vengeance, to his own destruction: a sufficiently familiar pattern. But any grown-up reader of *Moby Dick* understands at once that this pattern is a mere blind, a concession to the brute fact that at bottom we still have no better way of portraying the storms of the soul than by means of physical action.

The subsurface meaning of the Ahab-*Moby Dick* relationship is that the two are one. *Moby Dick* is a monster thrashing about in the Pacific of Ahab’s brain. It is as much a part of him as is his leg of ivory. The struggle that takes place on the vast marine or at the ends of a hundred harpoons is but Melville’s method of exteriorizing the combat in the arena of Ahab’s own chiaroscuro spirit.

The White Whale swam before him as the monomaniac incarnation of all those malicious agencies which some deep men feel eating in them, till they are left living on with half a heart and half a lung. That intangible malignity which has been from the beginning; to whose dominion even the modern Christians ascribe one-half of the worlds; which the ancient Ophites of the east revered in their statue devil; — Ahab did not fall down and worship it like them; but deliriously transferring its idea to the abhorred white whale, he pitted himself, all mutilated, against it. All that most maddens and torments; all that stirs up the lees of things; all truth with malice in it; all that cracks the sinews and cakes the brain; all the subtle demonisms of life and thought; all evil, to crazy Ahab, were visibly personified, and made practically assailable in *Moby Dick*. He piled upon the whale’s white hump the sum of all the general rage and hate felt by his whole race from Adam down; and then, as if his chest had been a mortar, he burst his hot heart’s shell upon it.

Like his cousins, Faust and Hamlet, Ahab is a divided man, at odds with his own mortality, at odds with all the grief in the world, at odds with his own incapacity to enjoy the world’s fair show, and therewith be content. The whole complex narrative of *Moby Dick*, with all its cetology and its digressions, is but the cunningly disguised soliloquy of a man in direst pain — pain which can cease only with suicide. And suicide is the true end of *Moby Dick*, the whale and the man, being one, turning upon each other simultaneously. There are certain men who are artists in suicide, who carve out for themselves, over many years, careers which have as their goal self-destruction. Ahab is such a man, and all his adventures, rages, conversations, soliloquies are but the joists and floorings of an immense structure of self-ruin.

If there is one grand type of character Melville knows to the last fiber and droplet of blood, it is the type self-dedicated to disaster. This self-dedication is a convoluted thing, never direct, never simple. Hamlet needs five acts and hundreds of lines of an-

guished poetry to achieve it. Ahab, in whom masochism is a complex art, cannot kill himself save in a roundabout manner, through the instrumentality of the White Whale. If there were no Moby Dick, it would be necessary for Ahab to invent one. In a sense, he is an invention, a white floating cancer in Ahab's own mind.

In the same way, to make sure that he will never deviate from this road, however curving, to disaster, Ahab strips himself of all associations that might waylay him into joy. He throws away his pipe in fury because it might bring him pleasure. Gifted, as he bitterly reflects, "with the high perception," he lacks "the low, enjoying power; damned, most subtly and most malignantly! damned in the midst of Paradise."

Just why he lacks "the low, enjoying power" Melville never tells us. He presents us with a fixed type; the causes of its fixity do not concern him. To give a certain surface rondure of motivation to Ahab's pessimism, he offers us the amputated leg, but we are not taken in by it; we know that this lightning-seared soul was deep in hell even in the days when he stood upon two feet of living bone. Moby Dick is a pretext, or, as Melville would say, a symbol.

Why do his men fear Ahab? Compare their emotion with that felt by the sailors toward Wolf Larsen in *The Sea-Wolf*. In Jack London's novel the men are afraid of Larsen, another man, another creature; and therefore their fear is overcomable. But no one on the *Pequod*, however brave he be, can overcome his fear of Ahab, because the fear is seated in himself. His Ahab-fear is a fear of *himself*, or rather of the pit of blackness, the central dark mother-lode of despair which every man at times knows to be within him. But we are afraid to confess this primordial horror. When we come upon one who, like Ahab, *does* confess it, exulting in his confession, we shrink back, as if we had looked in the mirror and seen there the horrid head of the Gorgon. It is this self-fear that explains Ahab's unholy domination of his crew. It explains too the desperate joy with which the men pursue Moby Dick, as if they felt that, by killing the monster, they could exorcise the fear and dispel with their puny harpoons the gathered and oppressive malice of the world.

3

It is generally recognized that the canons of the ordinary novel do not apply to *Moby Dick*. If we applied them we should be forced to put it down as an inept, occasionally powerful, but on the whole

puzzling affair. This was the conventional opinion up to two decades ago. During those decades we have discovered *Moby Dick* to be a masterpiece. What caused this shift in perspective? To put it simply, we discovered how *Moby Dick* should be read. We must read it not as if it were a novel but as if it were a myth. A novel is a tale. A myth is a disguised method of expressing mankind's deepest terrors and longings. The myth uses the narrative form, and is often mistaken for true narrative. Once we feel the truth of this distinction, the greatness of *Moby Dick* becomes manifest: we have learned how to read it.

Moby Dick is a myth of Evil and Tragedy, as the Christian epic is a myth of Good and Salvation. "Both the ancestry and posterity of Grief go further than the ancestry and posterity of Joy," thinks Ahab; and this central brooding conviction threads every page of the story, even when it seems most concerned with try-pots, harpoons, and sperm oil.

The note is struck in the very opening sentence — surely the most magical first sentence in literature. "Call me Ishmael." Who is Ishmael? He is the narrator, but he is also Ahab (as all the characters of the book are partially Ahab) and he is also you and I, considered as eternal outcasts, which we are, the experience of birth being in a sense the casting-off of the moorings that attach us quite literally to mankind.

The *Pequod* seems a crowded world. Indeed it is a microcosm, with its philosophers, its men of action, its lunatics, its African savages and Polynesian cannibals. Yet, for all the shapes that man its boats or raise its sails, the *Pequod* is a heaving hell of lonely and grief-touched souls, whose solitudes are gathered up and made manifest in the figure of Ahab. Melville underlines this perception in the very abode of community itself, in the Whaleman's Chapel, where "each silent worshipper seemed purposely sitting apart from the other, as if each silent grief were insular and incommunicable."

The symbolic values of the book are not allegorically plain, as in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, for Melville does not have Bunyan's Protestant certitude. They waver, shadow-like, at times emerging into the world of reality, at times descending into the subterranean of myth. For instance, Fedallah and his Malays do not merely "represent" the evil spirits conjured up by Ahab's necromantic power. They are in truth these very spirits. Yet at the same time they fulfill a solid and specific function aboard the *Pequod*. They are at one and the same time part of a whaling cruise and of Hell. It is this extraordinary ambiguity that gives *Moby Dick* its special murky atmosphere and which may have been responsible

for the lack of understanding that was its portion for so many years.

Yet there should have been no misunderstanding, for Melville in a dozen passages reiterates that his story is not to be taken literally. The symbolism is not simple, no mere system of correspondences. It is rather the subtle atmosphere the whole story breathes. It is not imposed (except occasionally, and then the effect is creaky). "All visible objects," says Ahab, "are but as pasteboard masks. But in each event — in the living act, the undoubted deed — there, some unknown but still reasoning thing puts forth the moulding of its features from behind the unreasoning mask."

The poet is one, it has been said, who sees resemblances. Then Melville is all poet, for he sees little else, the world being for him a shadow-show, a whale-line but the halter round all men's necks, the very earth itself but the "insular Tahiti," in the

soul of man, encompassed by the "appalling ocean" of "the horrors of the half-known life."

This vivid sense of an extra, invisible dimension in all things makes it possible for Melville's alembicating mind to mix such incongruities as angels and spermaceti, and distill an essence of beauty.

Finally, *Moby Dick* is America's most unparochial great book, less delivered over to a time and place than the work of even our freest minds, Emerson and Whitman. It is conceived on a vast scale, it shakes hands with prairie seas and great distances, it invades with its conquistador prose "the remotest secret drawers and lockers of the world." It has towering faults of taste, it is often willful and obscure, but it will remain America's unarguable contribution to world literature, so many-leveled is it, so wide-ranging in that nether world which is the defiant but secretly terror-stricken soul of man, alone and appalled by his aloneness.

WINGATE'S BURMA RAID

by CHARLES J. ROLO

1

LED BY Brigadier Orde Charles Wingate, eight British columns last February secretly crossed from India through the Japanese lines into Burma and then for three months spread confusion and panic. The Japanese buzzed about Wingate and his men like bees from an overturned hive, but were never able to stop them. The expedition wiped out Japanese outposts, exploded ammunition dumps, wrecked airfields and hangars.

In Burma's mountains and jungles, every line of communication is a crucial life-line. Wingate's men — he called them Chindits after the dragons which guard Burmese temples — put highways out of commission, blew up bridges, and dynamited the key railway along a 100-mile stretch. All this time every pound of supplies for Wingate's several thousand men was flown over the frontier by the RAF and dropped by parachute.

CHARLES J. ROLO was born in Egypt of British parents and has lived in the United States since his graduation from Oxford five years ago. A member of the New York staff of the British Information Services, he is the author of a book dealing with radio propaganda, and his work has appeared in many magazines.

The raiders penetrated 300 miles into Japanese-held territory and did damage on a front 300 miles wide, then made good their escape by a heroic march back to India. Casualties for the whole campaign were fewer than anyone had dared to predict. It will be one of the legendary tales of this war.

But it was much more than pure adventure, for the expedition accomplished important strategic aims. It relieved pressure on the Chinese and on the heroic little force of Burmese tribesmen still holding out in the north. It gathered information which enabled the RAF to make devastating raids on Japanese concentration points. It tied up the Japanese on repair work all summer and probably staved off an invasion of India. Above all, it set a pattern of training and tactics for the reconquest of Burma. Keen-eyed little Gurkhas, loyal Burmese, and a regiment of city-bred Englishmen beat the Japanese soldier at his own game and showed him he was no longer master of the jungle.

When Wingate arrived in India, in the summer of 1942, he had never seen a Japanese soldier and knew nothing about jungle fighting. The first thing he did

was to send for books — on the training, tactics, religion, and customs of the enemy, and the climate and topography of Burma — and for every available report on the engagements fought against the Japanese. When he had mastered the material, he laid his plan of campaign.

Wingate explained: "My organization is built around two weapons — the plane and the radio. Our supplies will be dropped from the air; we shall have no other line of communication. We shall maintain contact by radio with the RAF and between the columns, which are self-contained mobile units, prepared to operate at long distances from one another."

Wingate's British Chindits were men from the North of England, aged twenty-eight to thirty-five — second-line troops taken from a coastal defense unit and sent out to India to do internal security work. None had ever been under fire. But for six sweltering months in the Indian jungles, Wingate trained them in river crossing, infiltration tactics, and long forced marches with heavy packs, until they were the toughest of shock troops. In fact, after the expedition had returned from Burma, one private remarked: "The whole job was a piece of cake compared to the training."

Field Marshal Wavell inspected the Wingate expedition before it left India and as a gesture of respect saluted the Chindits before they could salute him. He knew — and every man knew — that anyone who was wounded, became sick, or fell out of line would probably be left to the Japanese.

2

THE half-mile-wide Chindwin River, boundary between British- and Japanese-held territory, was the first critical step in the advance. Darkness was approaching as the main body of Wingate's men reached the stream. Reconnaissance parties had already reported that the opposite bank for some miles was clear of enemy patrols. One of the column commanders whistled a bird call. It was faintly repeated in the distance, and the troops filed quietly into a rice paddy field on the bank of the river.

The heavy equipment was ferried across in sampans, rubber boats, and dugouts. The officers and men stripped and swam across against the swift current. At dawn scouts reported that no enemy patrols were in sight, and the crossing continued through the day and far into the night. Wingate tossed his helmet into the last canoe, peeled off his clothes, and plunged into the swirling yellow-brown water.

The Chindits' advance took them through dense jungle, over razorback mountains, along paths not more than three feet wide flanked by sheer precipices, then down into valleys where the elephant grass grows taller than a man. Rotting skeletons marked the tracks over which the Allies had retreated the summer before.

Wingate used a variety of stratagems to evade Japanese concentrations. He kept clear of beaten tracks, hacking his own path through the jungle. At times he took laborious precautions to cover up footprints, or again he would send out "deception groups" to lay false trails. But mainly he relied on speed of movement. His raiding parties would stab at an objective, then cover five or six miles at top speed before the Japanese could bring up more troops.

Enemy patrols were often so close to Wingate's men that scouts would bump into each other in the jungle. One Chindit came face to face with a red-capped Japanese officer, probably a Brigadier, who spun around and fled into the undergrowth yelling: "Wheel! wheel! British!" At night, to trick the Chindits into betraying their position, Japanese officers would cry out: "Sergeant Major, come over here." Throughout the campaign Wingate's men were skirmishing almost continually, and killed more than a thousand Japanese. But the enemy never caught up with them in force.

Frequently the Chindits covered thirty miles a day in a temperature of 105 in the shade. Wingate saw to it that not a moment was wasted. He forbade shaving because it would mean ten minutes less sleep; all waking hours were spent marching or fighting. Wingate had a theory that sickness could be kept down by constant marching — and it is a fact that there was hardly a case of malaria while the columns were on the march.

At the head of each column trotted scouting dogs, trained to recognize the scent of the Japanese. The eight prongs of the expedition kept in constant touch with one another by radio, messenger dogs, carrier pigeons, and strange bird calls. Elephants, ridden by little Burmese mahouts, plodded ahead with the mortars, Bren guns, folding boats, and wireless sets with a thousand-mile range. Next came the horses and men; then the pack mules. In the rear were the slow-moving oxen and small gray bullocks, drawing carts loaded with machine guns, tommy guns, grenades, rifles, and ammunition. Wingate marched at the head of one column, issuing orders from a radio mounted on a mule, and receiving daily reports by radio from his company commanders.

The Chindits were equipped with rubber-soled

hockey shoes, Australian-type slouch hats, anti-mosquito veils, and machetes. Each man entered Burma with six days' paratroop rations on his back, and thereafter was supplied from the air. All told, the Wingate expedition received 500,000 pounds of air-borne supplies.

An RAF flying officer marched with each column to select sites for dropping the supplies — rice fields, dried-up river beds, tracts of flattened elephant grass. Wireless messages in code notified the air base in Assam of the exact time and place for the next delivery. Smoke columns guided the aircraft in the daytime, flares and Very lights at night.

Frequently within a few minutes' flight of Japanese airfields, the big planes would swoop as low as 150 feet, releasing by parachute their loads of arms, ammunition, dynamite, and ration cans containing bully beef, biscuits, dates, raisins, tea, sugar, salt, and Vitamin C tablets. Breakable equipment was so carefully packed in canvas-covered wicker containers that, of the many hundreds of bottles of rum parachuted to the Chindits, only one broke.

The RAF made a valiant attempt to give the columns any special items they requested. One officer asked for a recently published life of Bernard Shaw, and got it by return trip. Another had his will dropped, for signature, when his column was surrounded by the Japanese. Two Irish majors appealed for a bottle of Irish whiskey with which to celebrate St. Patrick's Day. When a column radioed to Assam at 5.00 P.M. an urgent request for 400 pounds of chocolate — a rare luxury in India — the message was immediately relayed to Calcutta, where a leading restaurant worked all night to make the chocolate. Next morning it was flown 700 miles into Burma.

On one occasion a Chindit raiding party dined in style. It came upon the headquarters of a Japanese unit, deserted except for servants busily preparing dinner. The Burmese obligingly waited on Wingate's men, who polished off every scrap of food in the camp.

The Burmese throughout were extraordinarily friendly to the Chindits. They always referred to the British as "the Government" and to their present rulers as "the Japs" and asked Wingate if "the Government" would soon return to restore trade and deal with the smallpox, which was spreading because of Japanese neglect.

The expedition had penetrated within 120 miles of the Burma Road when Wingate received orders to return to India. When it reached the Irrawaddy on the way back — it was a bitterly cold night with a brilliant moon — the Japanese opened up with mortars and machine guns. Wingate could have forced

a crossing, but it would have meant heavy losses. Instead he ordered the Chindits to break up into groups of forty, and to play hide-and-seek in the jungle until they had given the Japanese the slip. Each party covered fifty miles in the next forty-eight hours, crossing the Irrawaddy safely at widely scattered points. Then, in order to travel rapidly, they buried their wireless sets, smashed their heavy equipment, and set off on the 300-mile trek to the boundary.

Without radios, air-borne supplies were cut off. The Chindits first ate their bullocks and mules, and then lived on rice, snakes, vultures, banana palms, jungle roots, and grass soup. Hunted every yard of the way, they were forced to avoid the main drinking places and sometimes went for days with only a few mouthfuls of water drained out of hollow bamboos. Knowing that their only security lay in speed, Wingate drove his men without mercy. And he brought them through.

3

THOUGH conventionally trained as a gunner at Woolwich Military Academy, Orde Wingate is a throwback to the adventurous days when commanders charged into battle at the head of their men. He carries on the tradition of the eccentric soldier-genius that the British Army produces once every generation — Clive of India, "Chinese" Gordon, Lawrence of Arabia. He is a "sword and Bible" general with a love for the desert and the jungle and a flair for strange races. "You can't help but follow him," said one of the Chindits, "when you see him charge through the elephant grass in that old pith helmet."

The sword, the Bible, and the flair for strange races are all a part of Wingate's heritage. His father served thirty-two years in the Indian Army, and after retiring founded a mission for the Pathans. His mother, too, is deeply religious and gave her son a strict Puritan upbringing. All his life faith has meant a great deal to Wingate — faith in a higher Providence, in his own destiny, and in the cause he is fighting for.

Wingate is of medium height and average build, with the lean face of an intellectual, deep-set, piercing blue eyes, a thin bony nose, severe mouth, and lantern jaw. His blond hair is bleaching into gray.

"The mind of the white man," Wingate believes, "is dulled by the narrow troughs in which we live," and he has always sought out broader horizons. When serving in Palestine he spent his leaves in a Jewish settlement. In the Sudan he mastered sev-

eral Arabic dialects. In the early morning he can be heard singing to himself in Arabic in his tent. In Burma, when he wished to congratulate a column commander, he would radio "Nice work" — in Arabic.

Wingate talks like an encyclopedia. In the officers' mess he will hold forth with equal facility on Yogi, the social habits of the hyena, the behavior of flies when you put them under a tumbler, eighteenth-century painting, and how to win the war. In Ethiopia he once amazed a group of junior officers with a discourse on the technique of hyena hunting by pistol in the moonlight. Out in the field, if he came upon two or three officers together, he would lecture them on the strategy and tactics of the campaign.

Wingate's zeal is no respecter of rank or title; his indiscretion is prodigious. He lectures superiors and subordinates alike on their mistakes of policy. He is probably the only British officer in modern times who has used the ancient prerogative of complaining in writing to the King about one of his superior officers. After provoking the wrath of a group of brass hats with his unorthodox ideas, Wingate once soberly remarked to a friend: "You know, I'm not half so crazy as people think."

The love of adventure runs deep in Wingate's blood. As a lieutenant, ordered to proceed from England to the Sudan, he crossed Europe via the Alps on a bicycle. Later he spent a long leave exploring the Libyan desert in search of the "Lost Oasis" mentioned in an ancient Arab ballad. He is a natural-born guerrilla fighter — fearless, inexhaustible, always alive to the unexpected. In Palestine in 1938 he was awarded the D.S.O. — to which he has since added two bars — for leading the night patrols that cleared the country of Axis-subsidized Arab terrorists. In Ethiopia he won the admiration and support of the tribesmen by a series of *swashbuckling commando forays* against vastly superior Italian forces.

Wingate's conception of warfare is a fantastic combination of the primitive and the modern. "Nothing is so devastating," he believes, "as to pounce upon the enemy in the dark, smite him hip and thigh, and vanish silently into the night." Yet Wingate is the man responsible for introducing to guerrilla warfare a Wellsian brand of modern science.

Wingate is one of the few white men in this war who have succeeded in swaying the primitive native mind. He always carries with him a duplicating machine, a loud speaker, and a unit of specially trained native propagandists. At every village in Burma and Ethiopia he paused long enough to hand out

leaflets and broadcast a manifesto framed in picturesque language. "The mysterious men who have come among you," he told the Burmese, "can summon from afar great and mysterious powers of the air, and will rid you of the fierce, scowling Japanese." The Burmese named him "Lord Protector of the Pagodas." They kept mum about the movements of the Chindits and guided Wingate's men over secret jungle trails. Without this coöperation the expedition would probably have been tracked down and annihilated.

The Ethiopian campaign was a typical Wingate show all the way — full of dash, surprise, and successful bluff. With only 1800 Sudanese and Ethiopian Askaris, a sprinkling of British officers and noncoms, two trench mortars, a few field guns, and virtually no air support, he stormed the first Italian strongholds in a series of rapier-like thrusts. Groups of fuzzy-haired Ethiopian irregulars — Wingate insisted they be called "Patriots" — rallied to his side. Altogether this half-pint army accounted for 40,000 Italians, killed or captured. In May, 1941, Wingate entered Addis Ababa on a white charger by the side of Haile Selassie.

Field Marshal Wavell was so impressed that he summoned Wingate to India in 1942, raised him to the rank of Brigadier, and gave him a free hand to build up a raiding force that would be the vanguard of reconquest in Burma.

The Wingate expedition proved several things which have a vital bearing on the coming offensive in Burma. It showed that a large force could operate indefinitely in enemy territory without orthodox lines of communication, and be supplied entirely from the air. It revealed that the Japanese have outstayed their welcome in Burma; after two years of Japanese intimidation, Burma's fifth column is ready to change sides. The expedition justified Wingate's boast that he could "make any man into a jungle fighter capable of coping with the best the Japanese have got," and it gave the Allies a new insight into their Japanese enemy.

"The Japanese," says Wingate, "is no superman. His operational schemes are the product of a third-rate brain. But the individual soldiers are fanatics. Put one of them in a hole with 100 rounds of ammunition, and tell him to die for the Emperor — and he will do it. The way to deal with him is to leave him in his hole and go behind him.

"Jungle warfare demands great resourcefulness and endurance. The Japanese has tremendous endurance, but he cannot solve problems he has never faced before. We have proved that we can beat him on his own chosen ground."

THE CONSERVATIVE IS SOMETIMES RIGHT

by ARTHUR A. BALLANTINE

I

PRIMARILY we Americans are fighting this war to conserve American institutions and values. We hear much discussion of better things to come with the peace, but the fact is that most Americans would not have the slightest hesitation about defending their existing institutions and values — with their lives if need be. And this is true simply because those institutions have held and still hold worth, irrespective of future change.

Many think of peace after the world-shaking war as furnishing opportunity and occasion for fundamental change in our domestic social structure, as well as in the international structure. For the purposes of discussion, let us imagine peace as wiping the domestic social slate absolutely clean: what would be the essence of the suggestions of the constructive American conservative?

Appropriate structure for the state is ordinarily the first requisite of any stable and satisfying individual life. The basic idea of the American conservative about the state would be that we should have a system under which the people control the rulers, instead of the rulers the people. This overriding freedom, coming down from the days of 1776 and 1789, was not mentioned with the famous four, — freedom of speech, of religion, from fear, and from want, — which the conservative would of course wish to respect.

Another freedom — the foundation of all freedoms in the American conception — which he would urge is economic freedom or its essence — not economic license, but economic liberty. That concept of the conservative means freedom to acquire an income — not merely to have it assigned by the government — and freedom to have the income fructify through industry, skill, and enterprise into

property which helps to protect from want oneself and one's children.

The conservative would advocate a program which provides for individual responsibility — not mere reliance upon government — as well as the correlative, economic opportunity. And he would urge the creation of a system of enforceable rights under which individuals can plan and conduct their affairs.

The system which he would urge of course bears striking resemblance to the system we have now. The American conservative readily acknowledges belief in the vitality of the conceptions of the founders of the Republic. In the words of Elihu Root, their Declaration “joined issue with all the theories of government in the past.” They sought to “establish the relation of individual citizenship to the State, on the basis of inalienable rights which governments are established to secure,” expressing in their state plan, after the long centuries of the Anglo-Saxon fight for freedom, “an enlarged conception of individual liberty and manhood, of individual right, of justice, of duty to the state, of the common good. . . .”

As opposed to the conservative, the radical of today, at least if he shares what appears to be the preponderant view on continental Europe, would revert to enormously expanded if not complete control by the state, keeping out almost all vestige of constitutionalism.

With this control the state would undertake, as it did not of old, to provide for each individual at least a minimum living with some protection from the hazards of life, and would either own or direct business enterprise. The state would conduct all education. It would brook little criticism. The state would become almost a religion, if not the religion.

How the leaders of the state would be chosen is obscure, but once in power they would be difficult to dislodge by anything short of revolution. Instead

ARTHUR A. BALLANTINE writes from long experience in legal and fiscal affairs. He served as Assistant Secretary of the Treasury and as Under Secretary of that department from March, 1931, to May, 1933, and has taken a lively interest in public questions and activities.

of their being accountable to the people, the people would be accountable to them.

Even when war is uppermost in our minds, social planning demands attention. In his very stimulating article in the May *Atlantic*, President Conant with vigor and charm urged the value, in social planning, of contribution by the possible "American radical." This radical, President Conant distinguished sharply from radicals of the more extreme European variety. The hypothetical views of the American radical, suggested but not advocated by President Conant, deserve earnest consideration and searching analysis.

But let not the American radical fondly imagine that he is the exclusive beneficiary of the teachings of American sages. Emerson, to whom President Conant refers, was somewhat more amenable to the demands of government than his thorny neighbor Thoreau; yet Emerson was hardly thinking of increased power for the state when he said, "Trust thyself: every heart vibrates to that iron string."

Emerson was far from exalting the conservative, but in "Politics" he went so far as to declare: "The spirit of our American radicalism is destructive and aimless; it has no ulterior and divine ends; but is destructive only out of hatred and selfishness." Indeed, Emerson said "the less government we have, the better, — the fewer laws, and the less confided power."

2

THE American radical's views as portrayed by President Conant relate primarily to *property*. His suggested treatment of property is the "kernel of his radical philosophy." Broadly, that radical "will not place a higher value on property rights than on human rights." On examination, however, that iridescent phrase yields little more content than a soap bubble!

For there are no property rights contrasting with human rights. Property as such has no rights at all. One may quibble about the case of a dog or a horse, protected by laws against cruelty to animals, but not about the status of any inanimate thing. What are referred to as "property rights" are *human rights* — rights in things. Even the rights of the soulless (and by the same token guiltless) corporation are in essence the rights of men and women having claims against or through that figment of the law, the corporation.

What we really have here is not consideration of property as against human beings, but consideration of some rights of human beings as against some of their other rights. Recognition of this plain fact

strikes all the drama from the cliché. Let us hope that the American radical will abandon it.

The American radical, as represented by President Conant, would "confiscate (by constitutional methods) all property once a generation," and would use the power of the state to "reorder the 'haves and the have-nots,'" keeping all on a truly democratic basis.

That keynote calls for some real thinking about the relation of rights in property to ordered freedom. To the conservative, property rights are far more than a particular freedom: they are the very basis of nearly all freedoms as we Americans have understood them.

By property, in this connection, we refer not so much to tangible things (horses, household goods, clothes) as to instruments of production and stocks, bonds, debts — all broadly claims on industry; also to debt claims against the state.

Now accumulated property of this nature, in private hands, represents the method of building up individual wealth, giving some measure of protection against want and also against subjection to the state. It also represents a basis for the development and control of industry. That basis has had manifest defects, but it has had the virtue of great inner impetus and great flexibility; it preserves invaluable initiative.

Private management contrasts with basic control in the hands of public officials, with the resulting aggrandizement of political power, the heaping up of bureaucracies, and the tendency to industrial paralysis.

"The magic of property turns sand into gold." It also turns those who might be serfs into free men. Take away property and you substitute for the stimulus to economic effort the stimulus to political effort. True, the worker can still secure wages or a salary, but the tendency would be to make those uniform and uninspiring. Take away the spring of private interest in business — the stern demands of the balance sheet and income account — and, as we see more clearly than ever, you make business both dead and wasteful.

Most important of all, take away private property, and you put the citizen at the mercy of the state. Control of the purse strings, the historic method of controlling the ruler, is gone when the citizen has no purse. What then becomes of any freedom to criticize the heavy-handed operations of public officials? Of any real freedom to change rulers? The state becomes a strait jacket. Happiness may be pursued, but only along the path of petty politics. Private property is essential to

government "of the people, by the people, for the people."

It is true that many of the virtues of property have to be sacrificed in waging war, as do many of the freedoms. We are, however, discussing institutions of peace, permanent institutions, not those of an emergency bringing into play unique considerations.

The American radical would not mean to go to the extreme of abolishing property — that he leaves for the European radical. Yet before he blithely leaps, he should look at the implications of his views. For he is carried very near to the extreme of abolition of property by his effort to redistribute property once a generation.

Redistribution of property could hardly be carried out as suggested. What is a generation to one man is not an anniversary date to another. Long ago in Russia holdings of land used to be redistributed among the peasants once every seven years. The plan did not seem to work very well, but at least it could be carried out. But how and on what principle would any periodic redivision of present forms of property between "haves" and "have-nots" be made? Perhaps the idea underlying the suggestion is simply that, at death, taxes would take everything.

The social effect of a prospective deprivation of one's property at some future date, by one method or another, would be much the same as that of present deprivation. One would have little reason to care for his property, to make it productive. The normal course would be to turn it into cash and splurge with the cash. It is not under such a stimulus that human beings or their enterprises are made fruitful and socially valuable.

The American radical should give some thought to the small property owner — the farmer who plants windbreaks (without subsidy), builds barns, and improves stock; the small merchant who by steady effort builds a business trusted by neighbors; the inventor; the lesser manufacturer. All these work for the future — work not merely for themselves but for their sons and daughters, building up enterprises their descendants may carry on. Their work is not done in a generation; and if its fruits were limited to a generation, much of it would not be undertaken.

The American conservative would stop short of any measure requiring the confiscation of property either at present or at prospective dates, periodical or irregular. Let not the radical think that heavy progressive income taxes and heavy death duties are new ideas! We already have such taxes in effect — at the very limit of productiveness both

fiscally and economically. The point at which the intelligent conservative would draw the line is the point at which such taxes become truly instruments of confiscation.

The constructive conservative would then urge that property, one of man's most beneficent inventions, be preserved from destruction, present or threatened. This he would propose because he sees in it the very basis of human freedom. Not alone political freedom, not alone freedom of speech and of religion, but also freedom from want. Here he thinks not merely of individual freedom but of that community freedom which is to be attained and maintained only by the flow of production from industry — industry which gives play to normal American emotions and habits. He does not believe that the essential flow will be forthcoming from bureaucracies, which are inevitably composed of persons chosen, in Professor Thomas N. Carver's phrase, "by the method of palaver."

3

TRUE conservatives are not reactionaries; indeed, they are sometimes hard to distinguish from the liberals. They do not seek to restore a dead past or to repeat acknowledged error. But they do believe that the vital seeds that made America, as we can see better now, the land of the greatest plenty and the greatest freedom will still assure such fruit. Better supervision by the state, yes, but not state domination, not a nation of wards of the state. Nothing has developed yet to make them believe that the state can do a better job for the people than the people can do for themselves.

There are dangers from which the conservative would save us. Take, for example, the widely noticed "Statement of Nine Rights" issued by the National Resources Planning Board. That statement affirms "the right to live in a system of free enterprise, free from compulsory labor, irresponsible private power, arbitrary public authority and unregulated monopolies."

This is characteristically American. We have here rights which can be and are guaranteed and enforced by the state, without commitment of the state to a system of state enterprise.

Yet the statement also lists as coördinate *rights* others, including: "(1) The right to work usefully and creatively through the productive years. (2) The right to fair pay, adequate to command the necessities and amenities of life in exchange for work, ideas, thrift, and other socially valuable service."

Desirable as is the opportunity to work for fair pay, it is not a right capable of legal assertion, unless against the state. And to fulfill rights to such employment, the state would have to undertake the management of substantially the whole business structure. Only by such management could the state even attempt to assure to each citizen useful employment, at pay bringing the desired returns, with protection from economic hazards.

There is a fundamental conflict between the right to live under a system of free enterprise, such as

built America, and the right to employment. Freedom is the greatest release for life-giving human energies, but it cannot live under regimentation and bureaucracies. In standing against state ownership and management of property, whether open or disguised, the constructive conservative believes that it is his plan which would truly preserve "the adventure, the opportunity to enjoy life and take part in advancing civilization." Security and freedom do not go hand in hand; and like the pioneers, he still lays his wager on freedom.



LIE IN THE DARK AND LISTEN

by NOEL COWARD

Lie in the dark and listen.
It's clear tonight, so they're flying high,
Hundreds of them, thousands perhaps,
Riding the icy, moonlit sky,
Men, machinery, bombs, and maps,
Altimeters and guns and charts,
Coffee, sandwiches, fleece-lined boots,
Bones and muscles and minds and hearts,
English saplings with English roots
Deep in the earth they've left below.
Lie in the dark and let them go;
Lie in the dark and listen.

Lie in the dark and listen.
They're going over in waves and waves
High above villages, hills, and streams,
Country churches and little graves
And little citizens' worried dreams;
Very soon they'll have reached the sea
And far below them will lie the bays
And cliffs and sands where they used to be
Taken for summer holidays.
Lie in the dark and let them go;
Theirs is a world we'll never know.
Lie in the dark and listen.

Lie in the dark and listen.
City magnates and steel contractors,
Factory workers and politicians,
Soft hysterical little actors,
Ballet dancers, reserved musicians,
Safe in your warm civilian beds,
Count your profits and count your sheep —
Life is passing above your heads,
Just turn over and try to sleep.
Lie in the dark and let them go;
There's one debt you'll forever owe.
Lie in the dark and listen.

THE STORY OF AN ISLAND

The Hurricane

by ROBERT DEAN FRISBIE

10

LAST night we talked about the cutter we had seen, we dreamed about it, we worried about it. When we first sighted her we thought she might be *Hurry Home* returning from Nassau and Manihiki to take us away from lonely Suvorov Atoll. There was no telling whether or not she had a mizzenmast; but once we were home and had studied her through the binocular, there was no question that she belonged to a species of vessel much evolved above Captain Prospect's "ship." She had a long main gaff and a tall mast, she was painted white, and aft there was some kind of shelter for the man at the wheel.

I hoped she had an engine, and this was associated with my worry, for she was within the north-east bight where so many ships have been wrecked. The wind was rising and squalls were darkening the northern sky. The last we saw of her she was beating up slowly on the port tack, four miles off the passage, presently to drive into a huge squall; and when it had passed, night had come down ominous, windy, and sudden.

This morning, on crossing to the outer beach, we saw her in about the same place. I had my binocular on her when she turned into Suvorov's turbulent passage. I could see a man at the starboard shrouds and another at the wheel. Both, like good sailors, kept their eyes ahead; and this must have taken courage, for every moment or two a great sea would surge up behind the tiny boat, lift her stern until she was virtually standing on her bowsprit, fling her forward a few yards, then roll under her to set her on her stern with bowsprit pointing almost

to the zenith; and then, as she tried to climb the wave, the current would drag her back so that at times she seemed to lose more than she gained. At last, when a sea broke a few feet aft of her transom and swept her deck from end to end, she was flung fully fifty yards ahead. Then she was safe, for she was out of the current and the tide rip and had entered the lagoon as soon as she had rounded the point.

The five of us hurried across the island to where we had left *Panikiniki*, and paddled out to meet the cutter. When we were close, and had read the name *Vagus* on her bow, we threw a line aboard, which one of the men made fast, and then climbed on deck.

A short red-faced man of about thirty, with a broken nose and the combined appearance of a pugilist and a dreamer, was at the wheel. He grinned rather alarmingly and stretched out his hand. I gave him my name.

"Frisbie!" he exclaimed, as if lost in astonishment. "Not *the* Frisbie—*the* Frisbie of Pukapuka!"

"Yes, that's me," I replied, somewhat abashed.

"Shake hands again!" he cried. "I never expected to meet *the* Frisbie of Pukapuka at Suvorov! My name is Powell."

Then came my turn. "Not *the* Powell!" I cried, trying to put the same warmth into my tone. "Not *the* Powell of Palmerston Island!"

"The same," he replied, grinning, and we shook hands yet once again, which made us even, the first one having been in mutual esteem, the second one in my honor, the third one in honor of Powell.

"We'll have a glass of rum when we get anchored," Powell added, which tied another knot in the bonds of friendship and made me aware that I had met a good man — according to the South Sea trader's definition of the word "good."

The cowboys — my four children — shook hands with Powell, and then the other member of the cutter's company came aft and was introduced as

It was more than twenty years ago that ROBERT DEAN FRISBIE quit his job on a San Francisco newspaper, walked down to the waterfront, and took ship to the South Seas. Since then he has lived as a white trader on lonely atolls from which an occasional manuscript wings its way back to Boston. This is the last of three installments. The hurricane Mr. Frisbie describes occurred in February, 1942.

John Pratt of London, the owner. He was about the same age as Powell. He had a droll expression; his eyeglasses added to the expression, and his long limbs completed it. His hair was thin and sandy, his nose long and pointed, his ears large — and his hands could belong only to an artist.

"Oh, you're F-f-frisbie," Pratt said, stuttering slightly. "I know all about you." Then, a fleeting sparkle in his eyes, he repeated what Powell had said: "We'll have a glass of rum when we're anchored."

With *Panikiniki* towing astern I piloted them to the anchorage; and when she was snugly berthed Powell and Pratt invited the five of us below. Cakes and lime juice were served to the cowboys, Barbados rum to the three hard-doers of the South Seas.

Vagus is the finest little vessel I have ever seen, heard of, or dreamed of. She was built on the lines of the Colin Archer North Sea lifeboats, the same lines Ralph Stock used for his famous *Dream Ship*. She is a double-ender, forty feet long, beamy, with a low freeboard, about eight feet draft, and with planking of two-and-a-half-inch English oak. Forward is a small winch that actually works. Aft of the winch is stowed a seaworthy dinghy. The mast is tall and must be fully a foot in diameter at the deck; the boom is as heavy as *Hurry Home's* mainmast. In the cockpit are the engine controls, the binnacle, and a thirty-six-inch hardwood wheel. The decks are of teak, the deck fastenings bronze.

Below, elegance has been sacrificed for simplicity. Everything is strong and of the best quality: waterproof canvas pillows and mattresses on the bunks, a primus stove with a five-gallon supply tank in the galley, instruments of navigation to delight the eye, an eighteen months' supply of food — corned-beef hash and chile con carne. Hormel hams and chickens, gingersnaps and cheese biscuits, dill pickles and Roquefort cheese, American canned beer and French bottled wine. Oh Lord, why go on enumerating? John Pratt's boat is the one I have dreamed of since I was old enough to know what a boat is. All my sins and all my failures, I verily believe, have been begotten by a feeling of intense frustration because I could never hope to own a boat like *Vagus*.

While sipping the Barbados rum I learned that John Pratt was a commercial artist. A year before World War II he sailed out of England, with a partner, for the West Indies. Arrived at Cuba, he sent his partner home, then cruised in the Caribbean for three years. A few months ago, in Panama, he provisioned his boat for an eighteen-months cruise and set out alone for Rarotonga. He made the passage in eighty-odd days. "I just let her g-g-go," he told me, with a kind of childish simplic-

ity that was altogether charming. "I never t-t-took in sail but once, but I hardly left the deck either. I always slept in the little h-h-half-shelter aft."

After stretching his legs ashore at Avarua, on Rarotonga, Pratt sailed to Palmerston Island, where lived Ronald Powell, a friend of former days. "Ron" Powell is a master shipwright, sailmaker, carpenter, cooper, blacksmith, sailor; and a dilettante in the arts. He has written a good book, but, more to his credit, he has built, at Palmerston, boats as fine as any shipyard could put out. With these boats the people have established a successful fishery. Powell has made his own salt from sea water, salted and smoked his fish, made his own barrels from coconut wood, packed the fish in them, and shipped them to Rarotonga by the ton. He has raised Palmerston from poverty to moderate opulence.

When Pratt put into Palmerston, ten days ago, Powell joined him for a short cruise among the Northern Islands. And here they are now, at Suvorov. And there we were, — the cowboys and I, — drinking Barbados rum and lime juice, gorging on Huntley & Palmers cakes, raising our voices to see who could do the most talking in the shortest time.

Presently I told them about the warplanes, and how we had taken cover, and later had sailed in search of castaways on Tou Islet; and when they asked me I told them about the star insignia on the warplanes' wings.

They had a good laugh over that and explained that the insignia, a star, was one of the stars from my own star-spangled banner. Then Pratt asked me what kind of planes they were, land or sea; and when I replied that I hadn't the foggiest idea he laughed again and told me I was a generation behind the times, for any child in England or America would instantly have catalogued them as sea, land, or amphibian; fighter, bomber, or observation.

11

IT is half past four in the morning, I note by flashing my torch at the clock-barometer combination on the wall opposite my bunk. (Torch batteries from *Vagus*.) The glass reads something like 29.70. Very low! We're in for a bad northwesterly, I fancy. The tree-house creaks and shakes with every blast of wind. Perhaps I made a mistake by straddling the house between two trees. Now if the trees bend in opposite directions the house may fall.

The passage has become so rough that there is no hope of sailing out to sea. This is what Powell and Pratt want to do, but they are here now and

they'll have to stay until the weather moderates. Their boat seems safe enough, for there isn't much danger of the weather's getting worse. The barometer remains steady at 29.70.

The wind has been in the east-northeast today, and seems to have settled there. It is blowing at about a force 8 — which in other words is a full storm. This is the strongest wind I have experienced in the South Seas save only for the edge of a hurricane that I went through in Pukapuka. The passage is a nightmare of confused fighting seas. *Vagus* is weathering it handsomely. We went aboard her this morning, started the engine, and steamed close to where the anchor had been dropped, there to drop a second hook and then let the boat drift back until both chains got an equal strain.

It was snug and comfortable in the cabin; the vessel pitched only slightly; somehow I felt securely isolated from the ominous weather outside. But when I went on deck a wet blast of wind slapped my face, the cutter seemed suddenly to pitch and roll, the face of the lagoon had a nasty look. Big seas, piling over the reef and shallows, had whitened the water with foam; long reaches of chopping waves curved away to the west as far as I could see. I noticed that the wharf, for the moment, was entirely under water. Seas were washing up the beach and into the jungle. The sky was ghastly.

"There's nothing more we can do," said Powell. "I'll break out some tinned pineapple and biscuits for Frisbie and his cowboys and we'll go ashore."

"Yes," Pratt agreed, "and break out a dozen c-c-cans of beer. I don't mind losing my boat, b-b-but I'd hate to have all that b-b-beer go to the bottom."

When we had paddled ashore we hauled *Panikiniki* well above the high-water mark; then, in as casual a way as possible, for my own peace of mind as well as for the cowboys', Powell's, and Pratt's, I drove a few spikes into the beams of the tree-house and fixed four braces to the ground-house posts. Glancing at the barometer, I found it had dropped to 29.50.

We now know there is a hurricane brewing somewhere in this vicinity, but we do not speak of it. A hurricane on a tiny island of twenty-five acres, with the highest elevation thirteen feet, and nothing more substantial underfoot than sand and gravel, is a nasty thing to contemplate.

When I woke early this morning I saw Pratt standing at the west window, his head and shoulders thrust out.

"She's still there," he said. "I can see her m-m-masts."

We had a good breakfast; then we left the clearing to walk toward the lagoon beach. We found that, during the night, the seas had swept inland halfway to the clearing and had cleaned out every sign of jungle, leaving the coconut trees standing in pure white sand. It was a bewildering sight. Here, where a day or two ago Johnny and I had hunted coconut crabs in dark and all but impenetrable jungle, was smooth, clean, sloping sand staked off with the slim pole-like boles of coconut palms, here and there, with fallen trees tracing their length down the beach. But we were soon shocked out of our bewilderment, for a great comber, a deluge, swept over the north point, surged down the beach with the noise of a freight train, washed up to within a yard of where we stood, then rolled away to divide its volume between the new channel and the South Islet. For a few moments Anchorage Island had been reduced in size to about five acres!

All the trees on the lagoon side of the island, we noticed, were black with roosting birds. Many frigate birds were still in the air, blown this way and that in wild confusion. Now and again one would be caught by a down gust of wind and dashed into the water. We found plenty of them, maimed or exhausted, on the beach, and we brought a few back to the clearing to be cooked for our noon meal.

At dusk *Vagus* was still weathering the storm; but she was receiving terrible punishment, with the wind holding her bow to the land and the seas striking her beam. We watched her rolling jerkily, her masthead tracing an arc of fully ninety degrees. Sometimes a particularly heavy sea would swing her round until she had her beam to the land; and then the wind and the sea would contend, the one blowing her stern lagoonward, the other bashing it back.

We realized that, with all this swinging about, her anchor chains must be fouling in the coral bottom; and we knew that soon the chains must work under a coral lump close below her bows, when, a sea heaving her up, something must part. We watched her out there, as evening darkened into night, but we did not speak about her, nor did we when we had returned to the clearing.

Now, at 7.00 P.M. the barometer is at 29.42! The wind still blows from the northeast, which means that the hurricane — if there is one — is headed straight for Suvorov. Its center will pass to the west-northwest; we shall be in the "dangerous semicircle."

We have strengthened the ground-house with new braces, lashings, and plenty of spikes; and we have taken refuge there tonight. *Vagus's* sails are on the windward side of the roof; they hang over the

eaves to the ground, where I have staked them down. My small chest and typewriter, the remaining rum, some tea and tobacco, and a few tools and pieces of rope are in the tree-house. The pearling cutter, near the water tank, has been secured to a tamanu stump with sixteen turns of rope.

The wind howls; the rain lashes across the island; the coconut trees bend far over, their fronds flung out and clustered together. Sometimes a tree breaks off, usually ten feet from the ground, and is carried fathoms away before it lands.

Ten o'clock. The children are asleep, unconscious of danger. Pratt sits with his back to a house post and smokes cigarettes. We do not talk, for it would mean shouting in each other's ears; but a fleeting glance, a ghost of a smile, speaks companionship. Powell is in the canoe. I shall sit under the eaves, on the lee side of the house, and watch for the big seas that may come at any minute. When they start flooding the clearing I will tie the children to the tamanu trees.

Midnight. I have just been on a tour of inspection during a lull in the rain. First I climbed to the tree-house to find everything shipshape, but to read the barometer at 29.26! In a way, the reading was a relief, for it convinced me that we are in the worst of the hurricane now.

Then I went to the path that leads from the tank to the stone wharf, and there I found that the seas had swept up to the clearing or, in other words, to within thirty yards of our house. Practically all the undergrowth between the clearing and the lagoon had been washed away.

Keeping a sharp lookout, with my torch darting this way and that, I ran to within ten yards of the shore end of the wharf. Then the feeling of peril became overpowering. I turned the torch up the beach, and its beam met a towering comber, only thirty yards away and seemingly curled up fifty feet above me and about to crash down! It carried on its crest a great mass of brush and limbs and coconut fronds! I do not know whether I had time or coolness enough to realize the uncanny silence of the thing, — to realize that it seemed to be moving with lethal silence, — for the noise of the wind drowned the thunder of the sea.

Panic seized me. I leaped back, bumped against a coconut tree, and the next instant, by some newborn agility and strength, I managed to climb high up on its trunk. There I swung the ends of my life-rope around the tree and held myself tightly against it. The comber swept beneath me. I could feel the tree shudder. A boulder bashed its trunk. The sea surged away. Weak, trembling, I loosened my life-rope and slipped to the ground. Then I turned my

torch to the lagoon, beyond the end of the wharf. *Vagus* was gone!

Returned to the clearing, I went to the canoe to get Powell out of it, for from what I had seen on the beach I knew that the first wave to flood the clearing would bring with it a great mass of debris, which would smash the canoe. Powell was glad enough to come to the ground-house. He said nothing; just rose like an obedient child and followed me.

I have not told Powell and Pratt that *Vagus* is gone, or of my own narrow escape. Ten yards from where I sit great hurricane seas are eating away the land.

Two weeks after the hurricane. As the morning of February 22 advanced, the wind, still blowing from the northeast, became fiercer. More and more frequently the combers swept the island from end to end, from six to fifteen feet deep under the tree-house where we had taken refuge. For a time we could see the lagoon beach, now not half so far away as formerly, for much of the land had been washed away. There was no sign of the wharf; the turmoil of water was indescribable.

By ten o'clock the last of the jungle was swept clean away, leaving only a desolate bank of sand with here and there a wind-ravaged coconut tree, a pile of debris, a great lump of coral wrenched from the barrier reef. And how insecure that bank of sand seemed to us, clinging to three of the trees still left standing, isolated in the midst of an ocean homicidal in its frenzy! At least nine out of every ten coconut trees had been uprooted or blown down. The tall coconut tree to windward leaned so far over that it sometimes touched the tree-house. We avoided looking at it or even thinking of it.

As the morning advanced, visibility lessened until at times we could see no more than twenty or thirty feet. We thought the air was thick with rain until we tasted it and found it salt; then we knew that the wind was scooping up great masses of the sea itself and flinging them in all but solid sheets across the land.

The little tree-house faced the wind bravely; and the roof stayed on, for I had lashed it down with sennit. Made of green, tough, and pliable nonu poles, the house leaned away from the wind: at times it folded down until its sides were at forty-five degrees from the vertical. I stood outside the doorway, braced between two limbs, within reach of the children should they need me. I watched the house bend and straighten in unison with the coconut trees.

There was an uncanny harmony about this concurring obedience to the wind that fascinated me

horribly; it fascinated me, too, to watch the wind, like a gigantic hand, push the house over until Pratt and the children, crouching in the doorway, would suddenly be outside the house; then to watch the roof slowly move back until it was over their heads again.

Shortly after ten o'clock I noticed the barometer. It read 28.32! I tapped it, but the needle did not move, so I concluded that it would register no lower. Lord knows what the true pressure was — or what it dropped to, later! Silly though it may seem, the barometer reading brought home to me more than did the wind and sea that we were experiencing a cyclonic storm. Perhaps unconsciously I had been defending my sanity by refusing wholly to admit the truth.

I studied the effect of the seas on an enormous tamanu tree standing some fifty feet to windward. It would stand, I concluded, so long as there was any land left on Anchorage Island. Then I looked on the east side of the trees we were in, to see that the roots were exposed where the water, piling over the barricade, had washed away the sand! It seemed, then, that the five tamanus could not stand much longer!

Alarmed for my children, I had half a mind to take them to the big tree at once. Then, my eyes closed to slits, I peered into the driving rain to see that the tree had fallen! And to make matters more desperate still, it was at that moment that the big limb, which I had my back to, broke off just above my head and crashed down on the tree-house!

Some god must have looked down on us and saved us, for the house did not collapse immediately. The broken end of the limb, fully fourteen inches in diameter, pushed the roof down slowly, giving Pratt time to climb out and me time to pull out the two children, who were still in it. Then I went to work lashing Elaine and Jakey to the limb I had been bracing my feet against. I tied the life-ropes loosely, in bowknots, so that I could free the children quickly if the tree fell. Pratt climbed over the wrecked house to the next tree and tied himself to it. I slipped my life-rope around the limb my back was to but kept the ends, untied, in my hands.

During the morning the wind had shifted very slowly from northeast to north-northeast; but from eleven o'clock until two it swung round rapidly to the north. Those were three hours of madness. We experienced something there is no name for in my vocabulary: a sort of insane exhilaration.

The air was now almost solid with salt water raging past us horizontally, seeming to drive its needles through us. The great combers hurled them-

selves beneath us almost continuously. There seemed to be no land. The tamanu trees were growing out of the sea itself — growing out of a sea in turmoil indescribable. The wind lashed us and clawed us and yelled in our ears; and we bowed our heads away from it, bereft of our senses.

I believed we were about to die in a wild nightmare of churning seas and tumbling masses of trees. More than once my brain took crazy flights, made me believe my tree was uprooted, was being rolled by the combers across the island and into the passage; and more than once I broke from my crazy hallucination to find myself holding my breath to keep from drowning.

About two o'clock the wind shifted suddenly from the north to the northwest; and it was then that the awful thing came down on us — but, alas, I have used my superlatives, I have no words left to describe it! When we saw the comber looming out of the rain we were struck dumb with awe. Distinctly I remember bracing myself for death. The comber could be heard above the shrieking of the wind. It raged toward us, engulfing everything in its path. It seized the fallen tamanu tree and flung it at us. The comber loomed above us, its crest thirty feet high; and I remember closing my eyes tightly, gritting my teeth, holding my breath, feeling every nerve come up taut.

There was a moment of crashing branches, rushing water. My life-rope bit into my flesh; then the ends were jerked from my hands. The comber gripped me and rolled me under. It pitched me this way and that. My head struck something and I nearly lost consciousness. I thought I could hear my children screaming for help I could not give. Then I was flung against a mass of branches. I clutched them blindly, held my breath, and felt the comber surge over my body. The water subsided; and then suddenly quietness! Even the wind seemed hushed! Was it death?

It was a moment before I dared open my eyes. When I did so I saw Johnny lying face downward directly below me, her arms and legs gripping the branches; I was wedged in among a great mass of branches high above her. Then I glanced this way and that, furtively, afraid of the havoc and death I felt certain the sea must have left in its wake. Jakey, his arm badly lacerated, was clinging to his limb, which now lay horizontal, three feet off the ground. Elaine hung limply by her life-rope, and I thought her dead until I climbed down to her and found her only stupefied by the shock. Pratt was hanging to his limb, one rib broken, limp and unconscious. Johnny and Nga were unhurt, and Powell and I had escaped with scratches.

In this predicament we awaited the next sea.

But there were no more combers! Perhaps the sudden shift in the wind had broken the offshore seas. By evening the wind had abated to the force of a full storm. To us, huddled in the lee of the barricade of fallen trees, so soaking wet that we heeded not the rain, it seemed that there was no wind at all.

Sometime during the night, when the noise of the storm had lessened, we heard, at first indistinctly, then louder and louder, the thunder of great combers rolling over the barrier reef.

12

CAPTAIN PROSPECT returned on March 25. *Hurry Home* had been blown hither and thither and yon, escaping the hurricane but pitched, bashed, and battered by the nasty weather on the edge of the storm, her chronometer run down, her radio battery exhausted, her almanac of a previous decade, her *Epitome* of a previous century, her captain half blind, her first officer an old woman. But there was plenty to eat, for schools of albacore followed the ship, and there were plenty of coconuts aboard for the first few weeks.

After the hurricane Captain Prospect started hunting for Manihiki in earnest, believing that if he didn't find it he ought at least to sight Nassau or some other island. He sailed on the port tack and he sailed on the starboard tack; he sailed to the north, the south, the east, the west; he saw land birds and he saw flotsam from the hurricane — but he saw no land.

Captain Prospect became worried; and when his coconuts gave out and his water ran low the worry waxed into something like a blue funk; and finally, when he decided to sail for Samoa, and a day or two later sighted an utterly unknown island, the blue funk assumed the symptoms of panic.

"Land ho!" Tangi sang out from the masthead.

"Where away?" cried the captain.

"Dead ahead!"

"What land is it?"

"I don't know!"

As they approached land their panic increased. Here and there were a few tiny islets, a few be-draggled coconut trees, not resembling any land in this part of the Pacific.

"Damn it!" the captain yelled. "There's no land here! Haven't I been dozens of times to every island in this part of the world? This island doesn't belong here! It's a mistake — no, it's a mirage!"

"Uriia — hurricane!" said Takataka; and then

they began to understand that they were looking at all that remained of once luxuriant Suvorov. When they had rounded the northeast point, where the Gull Group used to be, and had seen Anchorage Island reduced to three little cays, they concluded that we must have perished. It did not seem possible that anyone could have lived through a disaster that caused such wreckage. Captain Prospect wrote in his log: —

March 24, 13^h: Observed Seven Islands, Suvorov, presenting a badly battered appearance, evidently having been visited by a violent gale, which same *Hurry Home* encountered and weathered handsomely on February 21 at a position 150 miles NNW or thereabouts.

18^h: Light breeze, and still too far off to make the entrance before dark. Am standing off to the NE for the night.

March 25, 10^h: Anchorage Island has the appearance of being badly swept by a hurricane, with no sign of life anywhere. It has been reduced to one-tenth its former area. There are now three small cays with a few coconut stumps where formerly there had been a rich little island of some 25 acres. On *Hurry Home's* departure for Nassau and Manihiki on January 24 there were left on the island Mr. R. Frisbie, a Yankee, together with his son and three daughters, who ranged in ages up to ten years. *Hurry Home* has now returned to Suvorov for water and repairs, has been two months at sea, having failed, due to the storm, to make Manihiki.

When the captain wrote this entry he did not know that we had miraculously survived, nor did he know of Powell and Pratt and the loss of *Vagus*. When we went aboard *Hurry Home* he told us he had expected to go ashore to hunt for and bury our bodies.

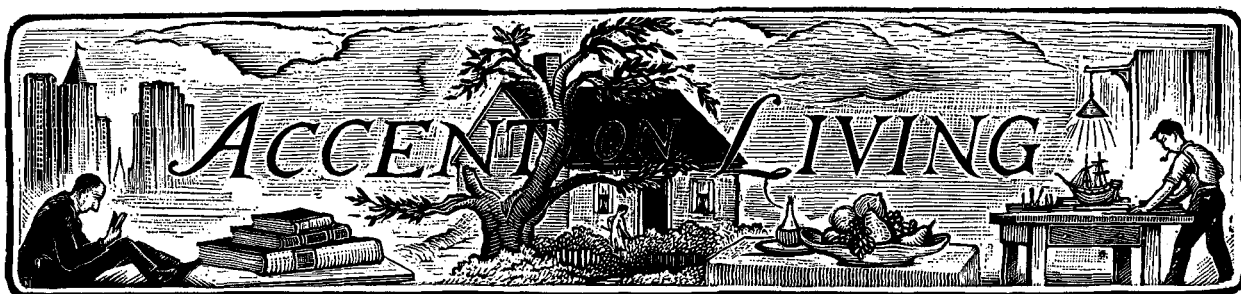
Hurry Home has sailed, taking Powell and Pratt to Rarotonga — if Captain Prospect can find Rarotonga. We have been left behind again, at our own request, for there was less than a drum of water aboard and very little food. The captain would have taken us had we decided to go, but he seemed relieved when we told him we would wait for his return. As it is, he has left us a little tobacco, tea, and soap, so we feel ourselves well off indeed.

"When the next ship comes we must leave," Johnny said as we sat by the campfire that night. "Jakey's pants — and yours too — are full of holes, and my sisters and I have only these ragged old dresses. We must buy plenty of pretty clothes."

"That means money, Johnny."

"Yes," she replied thoughtfully, "we'll all have to go to work for our uncle. What is his name?"

"Uncle Sam."



The Captain's Dinner

By M. F. K. FISHER

THE Captain's Dinner was strange. We were off the coast of Lower California. The water was so calm that we could hear flying fish slap against it. We ate at a long table out on deck, under an awning between us and the enormous stars.

The Captain looked well in his white uniform, and smiled almost warmly at us all, probably thanking God that most of us would leave him in a few days. The waiters were excited, the way the Filipino boys used to be at boarding school when there was a Christmas party, and the table looked like something from a Renaissance painting.

There were galantines and aspics down the center, with ripe grapes brought from Italy and stranger fruits from all the ports we'd touched, and crowning everything two stuffed pheasants in their dulled but still dashing feathers. There were wineglasses on stems, and little printed menus, proof that this masterpiece of a meal was known about in Rome, long since.

We ate and drank and heard our own suddenly friendly voices over the dark waters. The waiters glided deftly, perhaps dreaming that they served at Biffi's instead of on this fifth-rate freighter, and we drank Asti Spumanti, undated but delightful.

And finally, while we clapped, the chef stood before us, bowing in the light from the narrow stairs. He wore his high bonnet and whites, and a long-tailed morning coat, and looked like a drawing by Ludwig Bemelmans, with oblique sadness in his pasty outlines.

There was a silence after our applause. He turned nervously toward the light, and breathed not at all. We heard shufflings and bumps. Then, up through the twisting white closeness of the stairway, borne on the backs and arms of three awe-struck kitchen boys, rose something almost too strange to talk about.

The chef stood back, bowing, discreetly wiping

A widely regarded authority on cookery, whose interest has embraced the homely as well as the high cuisine, M. F. K. FISHER is the author of *Serve It Forth* and *How to Cook a Wolf*. She divides her time between California and New York.

the sweat from his white face. The Captain applauded. We all clapped, and even cheered. The three boys set the thing on a special table.

It was a replica, about as long as a man's coffin, of the cathedral at Milano. It was made in white and pink sugar. There was a light inside, of course, and it glowed there on the deck of the little ship, trembling in every flying buttress with the Mexican ground swell, pure and ridiculous; and something about it shamed me.

It was a little dusty. It had undoubtedly been mended, after mighty storms, in the dim galleys of a hundred ships, better but never worse than this. It was like a flag flying for the chef, a bulwark all in spun sugar against the breath of corruption. It was his masterpiece, made years ago in some famous kitchen, and he showed it to us now with dignity.



The Maestro

By HOWARD TAUBMAN

THE essence of the conductor's job is to lead; and if he does so with success, he tends to become dictatorial. Toscanini has said that in life he is a democrat but in music a monarchist — with himself, of course, as the monarch. Watch him at rehearsals and you soon find out that he means it.

He was once rehearsing the first performance of a new symphony with the New York Philharmonic. In front of him was the manuscript of the score, fresh from the composer's hand, the pages unbound. When the men did not give him what he wished, Toscanini picked up the score and flung it at them. The pages scattered like leaves in the wind. Several of the musicians hastened to pick them up, and the concertmaster slowly assembled them and handed Toscanini the ordered pile. Still raging, Toscanini promptly flung the manuscript at the men



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hospitals we have today. They're called "voluntary hospitals" because they operate without financial profit for anyone. That's why they are so dependent upon civic-minded people for help in keeping abreast of medical advancements, providing free clinical attention to those less fortunate, meeting those things your Daddy calls "deficits."

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again, and once again a shower of pages fluttered over the orchestra.

Toscanini's habit of hurling the score to the floor troubled the orderly instincts of Emil Greinert, the orchestra's librarian. He observed that the maestro's first move, when he became furious during a rehearsal, was to grip his baton in both hands and to snap it violently. If he succeeded in breaking it, he usually cooled off and the rehearsal went on; if he didn't, there was score-flinging.

The librarian made it his business to have on hand a large supply of reasonably fragile batons. If a rehearsal went badly, Toscanini might break as many as half a dozen batons, and the librarian would dash off to the wings to get spares, shouting to his assistant: "Lumber, lumber!"

Toscanini's rehearsals are fiercely concentrated and intense. "Every rehearsal is like a concert to me," he says, "and every concert like a debut." Wearing his shiny black-alpaca jacket, cut like a cadet's coat, with a stand-up collar, Toscanini comes out on the stage quickly, picks up his baton, and gets down to business. His comments are strictly on the music — in a mixture of Italian and English phrases. He pleads with his men to sing. He asks them to "put something into it." Once he asked a vocal soloist to "make a face like an angel."

He sings along with the orchestra in a strangely cracked voice, low and hoarse. He sometimes forgets about this habit. Once, in Salzburg, during a tense dress rehearsal, his voice howled out above the instruments. He halted the orchestra in amazement. "For the love of God," he cried, "who is singing here?"



When a performer violates in performance the preparations made in rehearsal, Toscanini's patience has a low boiling point. Years ago he fought against singers who held on to high notes as long as their breath lasted, since this was a liberty they did not dare take in rehearsal. Caruso did it once, and when he finally let go of the note with an explosion of sound, the maestro said in a stage whisper, "*E finito, Caruso?*"

When Toscanini did *Otello* at the Metropolitan

HOWARD TAUBMAN is the Music Editor of the *New York Times*. His latest book, *Music on My Beat*, from which these excerpts are taken, will be published this autumn by Simon and Schuster.

with Leo Slezak in the title role, the big tenor kept omitting the same measures, inexplicably, during rehearsal. Toscanini made a point of visiting Slezak in his dressing room before the performance to remind him of the phrase and to play it on the piano for him. When Slezak forgot it once more, Toscanini paused in the middle of the aria and yelled, "*Porco Slezak, porco Slezak!*"

Toscanini's outbursts of fury get results — sometimes. He once bawled out a pianist so violently



that the poor fellow turned white and could not do anything accurately during the rest of the session. Another time he flung a beautiful gift watch to the floor, smashing it to bits. He was then given a bulky Ingersoll by the players, with an inscription, "For rehearsals."

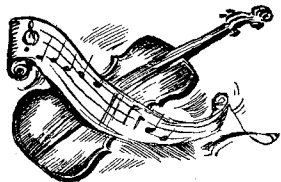
When he took over the NBC Symphony Orchestra, the officials of the company prepared themselves for the inevitable rages. They assigned a functionary to sit in at rehearsals and telephone bulletins to the top executives. Occasionally the bulletins went like this: "Clear, calm"; "Breeze coming up"; "Calm again." At other times they went: "Rough wind"; "Gale blowing"; "Tornado"; "SOS." The last meant that Toscanini had rushed off the podium and had barricaded himself in his dressing room. It took a veteran of many years' experience to deal with him at this juncture.

2

The conductor's dictatorial urge expresses itself in many ways: Toscanini is tempestuous; Stokowski is coldly ironical; Koussevitzky flushes and becomes stern; Mengelberg used to deliver long, didactic discourses. Sir Thomas Beecham's manner is distant though biting. During a rehearsal with New York City's WPA Orchestra, he discovered that there was no organist for a work that demanded the organ. He would not go on until an organist was obtained. The orchestra manager asked the pianist of the ensemble whether she could play the organ. No, but she was willing to try. The rehearsal began and the young lady entered — badly, of course — with the first measures of the organ part. Sir Thomas sat back, his arms folded, and said, "Young

woman, what *are* you doing at the monolith?" Without a word, she slipped back to the piano.

Sir Thomas, through a career of more than forty years, has become a law unto himself. The basic reasons are understandable. A rich man by inheritance, he has been able to accomplish what he wanted, fighting against stuffy tradition and speaking his mind bluntly. Now in his sixties, he is a wonderfully crotchety and outspoken citizen. When an audience applauded a soloist before the orchestra finished, he shouted at them, "Respect for the music!"



His entrance upon the scene as a guest conductor at the Metropolitan Opera was something new even for that home of eccentricity and temperament. Sir Thomas began by breaking all the rules. He walked into his first rehearsal with a big fat cigar stuck in his mouth and kept puffing away under a SMOKING PROHIBITED sign.

Another time he sat with folded arms, puffing at a cigar, and listened to the chorus sing through a long scene. He did not interrupt to criticize or comment. When the passage was over he said, "It reminds me of the Salvation Army."

Bruno Walter is gentle and persuasive in his handling of an orchestra. He works extensively on the emotional and interpretive aspects of a score, paying a major orchestra the compliment of assuming that it knows the mechanics. Rehearsing Strauss's *Don Juan*, he said to the New York Philharmonic-Symphony, "If I were a woman, I should not believe in your seductiveness." If an orchestra has not the graceful touch he seeks, he suggests, "Now you must smile."

There is grave danger in this approach, for instrumentalists as a rule are literal-minded, and they want instructions in precise musical terms. Bruno Walter is experienced enough to succeed with the poetic touch. Lesser men run into trouble. One conductor used highfalutin talk through a rehearsal, and at one point said to a horn player, "Now you must sound as if we were alone on a high mountain." The weary horn player wailed, "Tell me one thing, maestro: what do you want, piano or forte?"

Photographers seem to bring out the most temperamental aspects of the great men of the podium. When a cameraman took a flash-bulb shot of Tos-

canini at the end of a concert, the maestro refused to return to the stage for curtain calls, as if the audience had been guilty of the breach of etiquette.

Stokowski handled an encounter with a photographer more amiably. After he had made *Fantasia* with Walt Disney, the studio decided that it wanted a new set of pictures of Stokowski rehearsing his Philadelphia Orchestra. A cameraman went down to Philadelphia and planted himself unobtrusively among the bull fiddles. Stokowski hurried in for the rehearsal and gave the signal to start, as was his custom, almost as soon as his feet landed on the podium. When he turned to cue in the bull fiddles, he saw the stranger with the camera. He objected to his presence, but when the photographer argued, Stokowski relented. "All right, sit among the violas."

The photographer, who knew nothing about music, wandered along the stage, peering intently at the instruments and looking vainly for violas. The men laughed. Stokowski, with a straight face, clicked his heels, bent from the waist, gave his arm to the photographer, and led him ceremoniously to the violas. Months later the photographer ran into Stokowski and greeted him with the challenge, "You don't remember me?" Stokowski smiled, "Aren't you the viola player?"

If conductors turn into dictators, they are frequently obliged to by force of circumstances. Differences of opinion with boards of directors occasionally drive a conductor with ideas and personality to fight; and when he wins, more than ever he is



likely to feel that he is the supreme high command. If he does win, it is perhaps better for his orchestra.

In the long association of Koussevitzky with the Boston Symphony, you would think that sweetness and light have always prevailed. Actually there has been more than one conflict between conductor and trustees. A trustee who contributed heavily to the deficit once said to Koussevitzky that if the men did something of which he disapproved he would disband the orchestra. The conductor's reply was: "What right have you to disband it? Has it ever occurred to you that the orchestra could disband you?"

Walter Damrosch has known how to make his way without fuss or ferment, or so it has seemed to

those who have studied the smooth course of his long career. At eighty-one he is still sailing through life serenely, accepting honors and staying in the limelight consistently and without apparent effort.

Damrosch is the perfect diplomat. I once asked him about America's younger composers. He answered in general terms, saying they were serious, promising, and so on. "What do you really think of them?" I asked. "Well," he paused, "I hate them." Damrosch is not the only conductor who feels that way. A composer called up a newspaper one day to ask whether his work was on a certain orchestra's forthcoming program. It was. The conductor had not bothered to notify the composer.

Being a young man himself, a chap like Erich Leinsdorf shows more regard for the feelings of the young composer. He was preparing a half-hour broadcast of a Mozart symphony and two short pieces by Paul Creston, an American. A couple of minutes had to be cut from the program. "Let's not leave out the living composer's music," he said. "Let's cut out the Mozart minuet. Who knows, maybe it was written by Süßmayer."



The Intruder

By WILLIAM FORCE STEAD

ALWAYS asleep the clover blooms,
Always asleep the elm expands,
And half asleep the herds emerge
To wade in drowsy pasture lands.

Always asleep the river runs,
And fishes glide with glazing eye,
The lion lives a fiery dream,
Birds dream their way across the sky.

Frogs find infinity in a pond,
Katydid in a sultry day;
Snug as a woven ball of wool
Earth sleeps along her rolling way.

Only the homeless heart of man
Starts in the night with stricken sense
Of star over star, and at the top
A winged and eyed Magnificence.



Old Bill

By J. FRANK DOBIE

THEY tell me that Jeb Rider's log cabin is still standing, about a quarter of a mile up the slope from the spring on Elm Creek. Nobody has struck oil in this part of East Texas yet, and so things out of the past live on there. People still talk about the Civil War, though years and years ago they put what was left of Uncle Jeb Rider in the ground, in the little graveyard where wild trumpet vines cover the lane fence with red flowers all through the summer months and into the fall. Old Bill disappeared long before that, but Uncle Jeb's story of Old Bill seems to have a chance to keep on blooming with the trumpet vines. This is the way he told it.

I

When me and my wife married, it was her idear having the house so fur up the slope from where we got water outa the spring on Ellum Creek. She was skeered of floods. I was nacherly agin having to tote water so fur, but 'fore long I sometimes wished it were further. I could walk down that trail and set on the cypress log there at the spring and kinder get peaceful. She was always badgering me to clear more land and plant more sweet pertaters and hoe the corn cleaner and do things like that, and I jest nacherly kinder like to squirrel roun' with the dogs like I'd always done.

The best dog I ever had was Old Bill. He was out of a bitch Pa brung from Tinnissee; that is, figgering in several ginerations between. I never can remember whether it was July 13 or July 14 he died, the year before the war started. Anyhow, one cloudy day about a month after he died I was going down the trail to the spring uncommon low in the mouth and was about half way when kinder unconscious-like

A resident of Austin, Texas, and professor of English literature at the University of Texas, J. FRANK DOBIE is widely known for his books on the history and range life of the Southwest.

Six years ago CBS put a new kind of program on the air. The sharks said it wouldn't work, for it was to contain nothing more melodramatic than a group of people around a dinner table discussing a topic of the day. It wasn't even to be a debate. But it worked all right. *The People's Platform* still goes on every Saturday evening at 6:15 (EWT). CBS listeners find new stimulus each week in hearing varying points of view given sincere, natural, thoughtful expression by people who ought to know what they are talking about, and who pull no punches. Freedom of speech can be lively, real, entertaining, and helpful.

★

Sooner or later you are going to have to know this so you might as well get it clear now: a program described in the trade as a "sustaining" program is one which originates in and is broadcast and paid for by the network or station. A "sponsored" program is one broadcast at the expense of an advertiser, who uses the program as a vehicle to carry a short message about his product or service.

★

The White House stopped calling those regular Tuesday and Friday meetings between the President and the Washington reporters "press conferences." The new name is "press and radio conferences." Radio having had its own reporters at these meetings for at least the past 10 years, agreed it was high time.

★

The recent and first sponsorship by United States Rubber Company of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony orchestra's Sunday afternoon concerts in Carnegie Hall marks another milestone in making great music popular music by making it familiar music. The average audience that listened to a single broadcast concert of the orchestra even before its sponsorship was estimated at 10 million people, or the capacity of 125 Yale bowls.

★

Although she never had a singing lesson in her life, Kate Smith has today a larger audience than any professional on the air, and is listened to by more Americans than any other individual except the President of the United States.

There is a worthy woman in the Connecticut Valley who boasts that she listens avidly and long to the radio and makes it a point to remember the product sponsoring her favorite program so as *not* to buy it. This upside-down gesture is probably her form of protest against something deep down, and not necessarily related to radio. For she goes to a lot of parties but she never neglects to thank her host.

★

Many of the 135 stations on the Columbia network guard their transmitter tubes with extra vigilance these days and nights, because they burn them full 24 hours a day in order to serve as monitor stations for the United States Army Air Forces. Naturally, most of these stations are along the seaboard. They are alert wardens in our defense against air attack.

★



Mrs. Nussbaum has paid all the installments on both bookends and is now on vacation.

★

Next Sunday on CBS is the 742nd consecutive half-hour of organ and choir-music from the Tabernacle of the Mormon Church in Salt Lake City. Maybe there is more steadfast or lovely or comforting music somewhere south of the angels, but where...

★

The night before the Allies took Messina CBS correspondent John Daly fell in with an American patrol 10 miles out of the city. The major gave him permission to go with the patrol and then report back to him. Daly hiked through the dark and dawn with the advance the last 7 miles into the city, inspected it for 2 hours, hooked a ride back to headquarters and the major. The major intercepted General Patton on his way into Messina; the general's aide, using the hood of his jeep as a desk, pencilled a note for Daly (and Merrill Mueller of NBC) to ride General Patton's own plane to Algiers if they could find the plane. The correspondents beat it for Palermo, arriving there at 6 p.m. Two hours later they located the general's plane. At the risk of inviting their own anti-aircraft fire they took off at 8, wrote their stories, and an

electric hand-torch in the blacked-out plane, and landed in Algiers. At 12:45 a.m. (6:45 p.m. EWT) Daly scuttled up the steps of the censor's office and got his story cleared 8 minutes before he went on the air in CBS "The World Today" by short-wave to New York and thence by the complete network to the American people. It was America's first eye-witness account of the looks of the city our army had taken that morning.

★

The printed press and the radio (as joint guardians of freedom of speech) have a lot in common but at one point they differ widely. Rare indeed is the newspaper or magazine that has no editorial page, for the flat-footed out-speaking of the editor or publisher. Rarer far is the radio station or network *with* an "editorial page". By and large, radio deliberately denies itself an "editorial page". There are many reasons why, but they all add up to the conviction in radio that its greatest service to the whole of the American people can be performed if folks are given the facts and allowed to form their own opinions. Radio sometimes envies the press its freedom to wade in and pitch hot bricks, especially on an issue involving its own interest. The press, on the other hand, often envies the inherent power of radio to make words come so much more alive than they do lying flat on a page. Both systems of communication are human, and both like to grumble, but the seasoned people in press and radio realize increasingly that their great inherent powers of communication are not to be abused without paying that most disagreeable of all penalties—unpopularity.

★

This is

CBS

the COLUMBIA

BROADCASTING SYSTEM

I heared sumpin behind me. Maybe it was a rustle in the leaves. I didn't pay no 'tention till I heared a low rattle. Then I looked, and I'll be dogged if it wasn't the biggest diamonback rattlesnake I ever see, right in the trail, not more'n six steps back.

When I stopped and looked, he stopped too and raised his head up in a curious way and looked at me without shaking his tail a-tall. It's that tail-shaking that makes a rattlesnake so fearsome, puts the jints in a human's backbone to shaking too. Well, I didn't have a thing with me to hit with, not even a water bucket, and when I glanced round fer



a stick there weren't none in reach. I started on down the trail agin to a dead dogwood I could break off. Then I looked back and that diamonback was coming on too, keeping a respectful distance and looking like he didn't mean no harm.

When I got to the dead dogwood and broke off a stick and drew it back to lamm the snake, he looked more harmless than ever. I can't explain it. There he was keeping a respectful distance, and all at once he sorter seemed to me like a dog that wants to foller you and be friends but's afraid to come too clost. Well, I stood there a-holding the stick, and he had his head up a little watching me, and his eyes jest seemed to say he understood.

Then I done clear contrary to nature. I throwed the stick away and started agin on down to the spring. Ever once in a while I'd turn my head and look back. The rattlesnake was still follering, humble and respectful. When I set down on the cypress log, he coiled up in a sliver of weak sunshine and kept looking right straight at me. Dreckly I begun to kinder talk to him. I was still a young man, remember, and a blamed fool about feeling sorry fer myself. And that old snake would nod his head aroun' and look like he felt sorry too.

When I started up to the cabin, he did the same, jest follering like a dog. About halfway up he dropped out, and I didn't see nothing more of him till the next day. I was going down to the spring agin to bring up some water fer Abbie to wash with. Right about the halfway place, he fell in behind me like he'd done the first time, and now his follering seemed jest as nacherl as a dog scratching fleas.

"See here," I says to him after we got settled at the spring, "I'm going to call you Bill. Bill, he was the best coon and possum dog I ever had, and he always understood me. When I wanted to squirrel aroun', he never had no idears about clearing off land or putting poles in the fence to keep the hawgs outer the field or anything like that. Yes, sir, you're Bill to me from now on."

And Bill jest nodded his head and looked grateful out of his eyes and shore would've talked if he could of. It was real soothing to be with him, and when Abbie went to squalling fer me to hurry up and bring on the water he acturly winked.

2

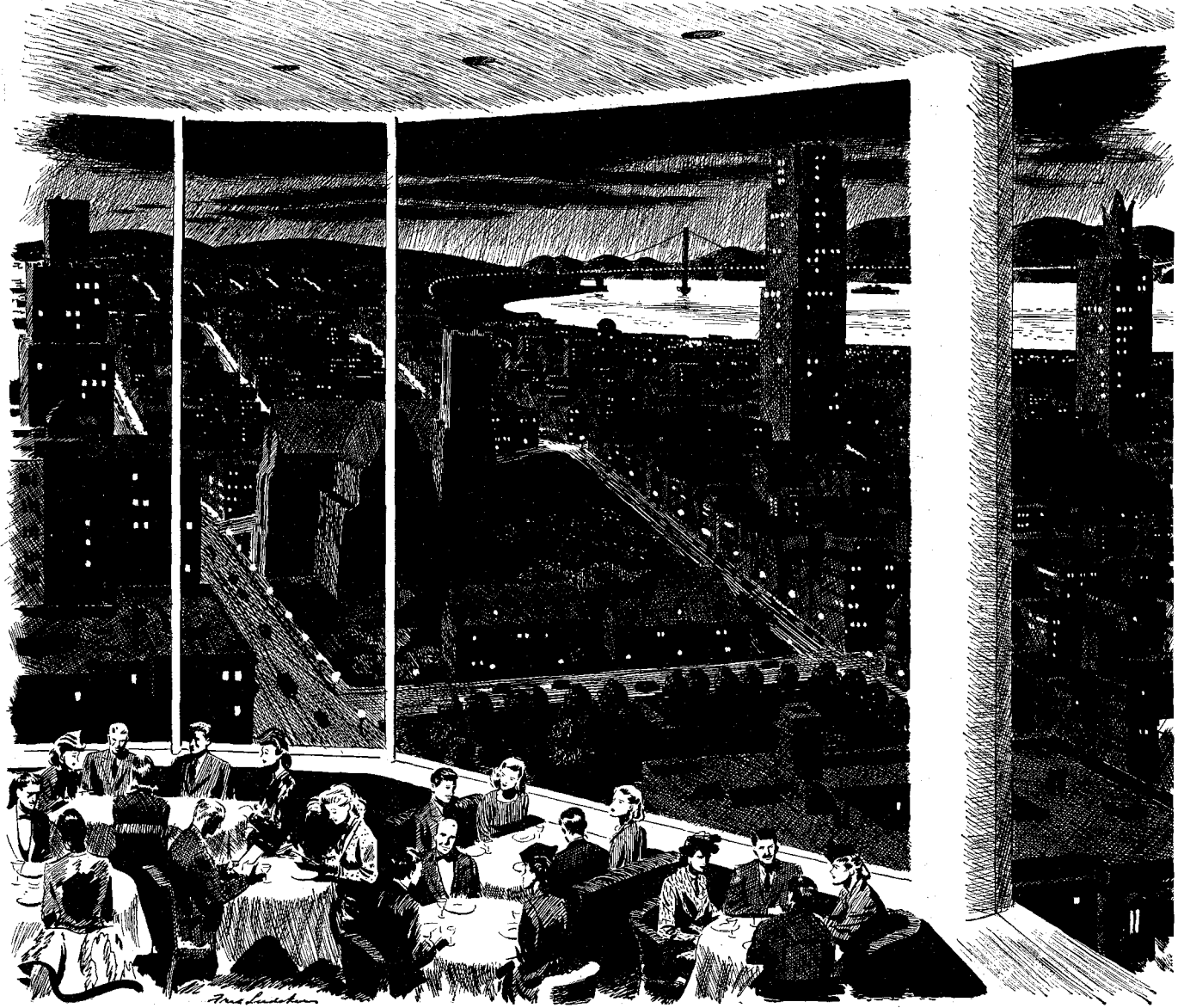
Well, after that we was together lots at the spring. Whenever I went to the store I'd hear talk about the Aberlitionists up north working to take the darkies away from us Southern folks and make 'em our equals, and more talk about the Black Republicans. When I got back I'd tell Bill about 'em — sometimes afore I told Abbie — and, by hoeky, he'd coil up and look fierce enough to bite a crowbar. Then the war did come. I volunteered fer Captain Abercrombie's company and traded off some corn and a mule fer a good, gentle horse and bought Abbie a new axe and got all ready to go. The evening afore I was to set out, I went down to the spring to kinder ca'm myself and tell Bill good-bye.



It looked like he understood all about the Yankees. I told him to look after things around the spring as best he could and I'd be back some day. The next morning after Abbie got my things all packed and I'd told her good-bye, I turned by the spring to water my horse.

Well, jest as I was coming out under that leaning ellum over the trail between the house and the spring, I felt sumpin drop acrost my shoulders. It would a-scared me if it hadn't been so nacherl. "So you want to go to war too, do you, Bill?" I says.

"I don't know how the fellers in camps would take to you," I says. "They're all Texians, you know," I says, "and got about as much use fer a rattlesnake as a wildcat has for a lost puppy." You see, I hadn't told a soul about Old Bill — not even Abbie. I jest didn't think anybody would under-



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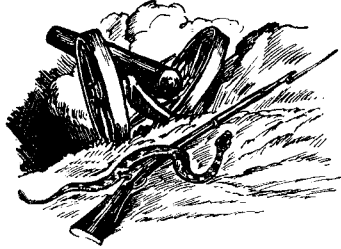
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stand. But if Bill was so set on going with me, I decided right then I'd try to convert the heathen.

"If you'll promise," I says to him, "not to bother nobody and stay put where I puts you, I'll take you. I'll explain to the fellers and maybe they'll get the idear." He nods and we rode on.

Some of the fellers seemed to think at first that I was jest an idiot, but they left Bill alone and he left them alone. I shore didn't have no trouble with



anybody trying to steal my blankets, and the way Jim Bowie — that's what I named my horse — and Old Bill got to be frenly with each other was a caution. Sometimes Jim Bowie would kinder noze Bill along the back, and many a time when Jim Bowie was a-grazing I've seen Bill crawling out in front of him and scaring off devilhorses so Jim Bowie wouldn't accerdently chew 'em up and swaller 'em. You know how a devilhorse once it's inside the stumick of an animal can kill it. I fixed up a bag for Old Bill to ride comfortable in, and when we moved, hung it on the horn of my saddle.

Fer months we jest practiced marching and squads-righting and squads-lefting and so on. I'd leave Old Bill on the edge of the parade grounds, and I got to noticing how interested he seemed in our movements. When we'd have a parade, he'd get exciteder than the colonel's horse. The band music was what set him up. "Dixie" was his favorite tune, and he got so he could sorter rattle it. It shore was comical to see him histing his tail to get the high notes.

Finally our training was over. We crossed the Mississippi River and joined Gin'ral Albert Sidney Johnston's forces. Then when Shiloh opened up on that Sunday morning in April, we was in it. We fought and we fit all day long, sometimes going forwards and sometimes backwards, sometimes in the brush and sometimes acrost clearings. We didn't know till next day that our gin'ral had been killed. If he had a-lived and if we'd a-had a few more like Old Bill, things would have turned out mighty different.

My rigiment was camped on Owl Creek, jest north of Shiloh Chapel, and jest before we went into battle that morning I took Old Bill over to a commissary wuggin and told him to stay there and told

the driver to kinder keep him. Late evening found us coming back into a long neck of woods that our colonel told us we'd have to clear of Yankees. They'd worked in between us and Owl Creek. We found 'em all right, but they was the deadest Yankees I ever see. At first we was bellying along on the ground, keeping behind trees and expecting fire. Then when we kept finding more and more dead uns, we figgered some other outfit had beat us to 'em. We got to breathing easy, and then somebody noticed that none of the dead Yanks bore bullet marks. It was all-fired strange, and the trees wasn't none of 'em creased neither.

I decided to make a little closer examination, and I pulled up the britches leg of one Yank. Jest above his shoe-top on the outside, where the ankle vein runs, I noticed a pair of little holes about the size of pin points. I found the same marks on the leg of the next Yank, on another, on another, and then, all of a suddent, I knowed Old Bill'd been there. I told the boys. They went to looking at the dead Yankee legs and couldn't hep being convinced.

We kept going through the neck of woods and counting dead Yankees till we got to Owl Creek, a little below camps. My ricollection is that the count run to 417, but it may have been a few less. Course, too, some few might've been counted twicest.



The Sunflower

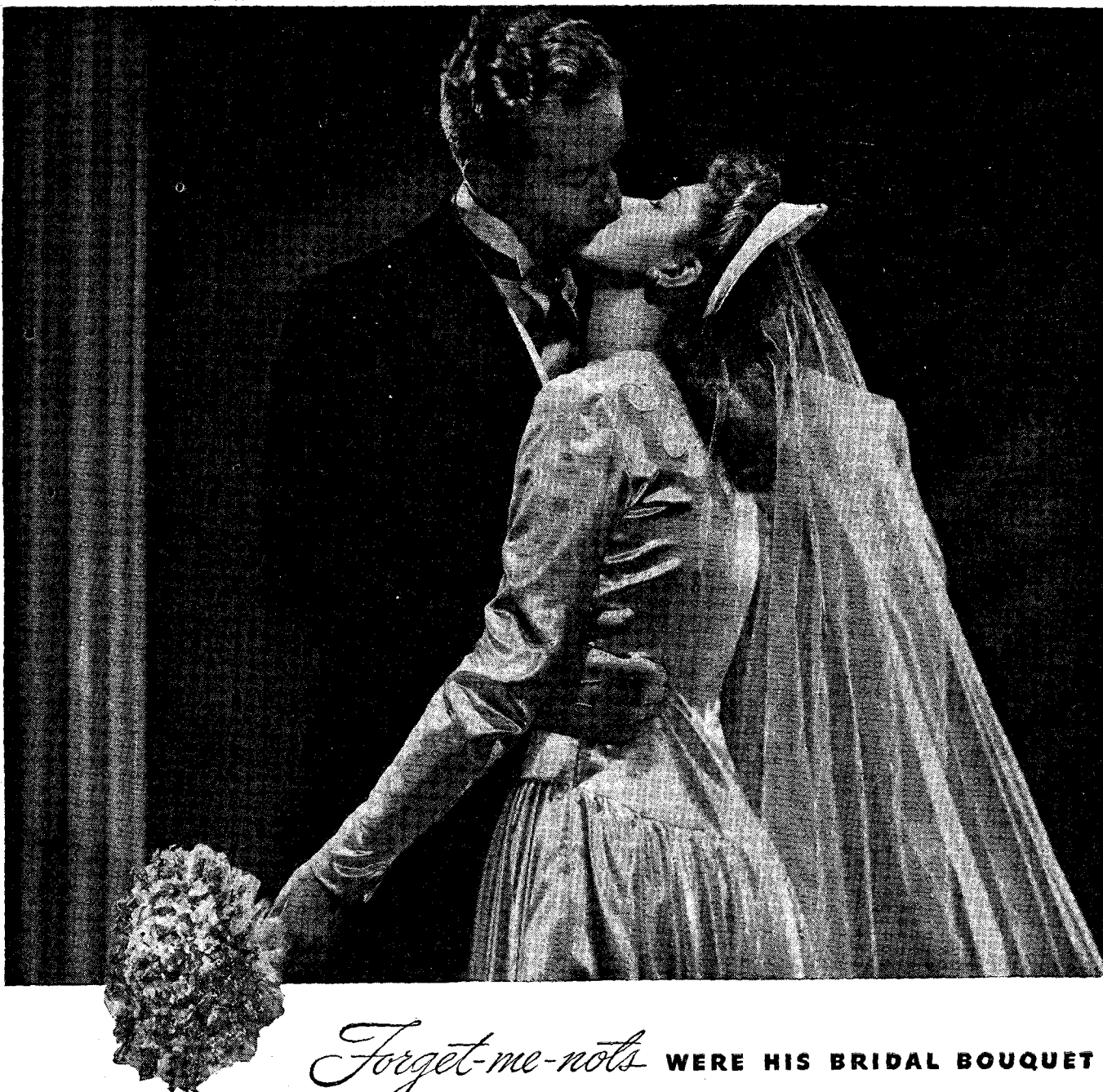
By PADRAIC COLUM

It looks illuminatingly to us
(The flowers round upblink upon their stems),
The Sunflower in the prospect's fadedness,
Solemn as stroke of a cathedral bell.

With stalk that gives ascension to the gold
Black-centered bloom, and unstrung leaves' devise,
Solemn as things that are complete and grand,
Sole, golden, round, the full-faced flower bides.

The Magian! It emblemed once the light
That is both truth and power; here it glows
Large as the words of Zoroastrian kings,
And solemn as the blessings they implored.

And solemn in its downfall, like some mild
King whom violent history bereaves:
Its gold bestrewn and its head downbent,
It stands among the potsherds, by the pales!



Forget-me-nots WERE HIS BRIDAL BOUQUET

ALWAYS love me, they said . . . always remember. And, as time went on, the young bride became a mother, grew older, wove the fabric of her life around her husband's, cherishing with him the laughter, the tenderness, the heartaches of their devoted little family.

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THE FUTURE BELONGS TO THOSE WHO PREPARE FOR IT



"Smile for the Gallery, Betty"

By ELIZABETH HICKS, USCGR(W)

ELIZABETH!" my father said solemnly one spring evening in 1938.

I looked up from the funny papers. "Oh, oh!" thought I, with quivering conscience. "This is it."

It was. "I've been talking to your professors," he continued.

That did it. It seemed that my freshman work in college had been rather neglected in my feverish attempt to break 90 on the golf course. Dad was very concerned over my future.

"Elizabeth," he said, "you're flunking English."

"Well — yes," I replied. "I had to practice my trap shots."

"You're flunking chemistry; you haven't been to your history class in a month."

I became engrossed in Dick Tracy again.

"Have I lost your interest?" The assistant superintendent of the Long Beach City Schools was becoming impatient.

"Oh, no — of course not."

Dad ran up the white flag. "Do you want to go to college," he said, "or do you want to use your college money to play tournament golf?"

I tried to be casual. "Why, I'd like to give golf a try, I think." I was bursting with a desire to kick my heels together, race into the street, and proclaim to all who cared to listen that I was through with the agonies of acquiring an education.

"Perhaps," was Dad's last feeble shot, "you'll gain something of a liberal education from a year or two in golf."

Little did he know what truth he spoke!

I played tournament golf with fanatic enthusiasm from that day until I won the national championship

The National Women's Golf Champion, ELIZABETH HICKS, has parked her clubs for the time being and joined the SPARS of the United States Coast Guard. She is now a seaman second class assigned to the Ninth Coast Guard District in Chicago.

at Brookline in September, 1941. I drove 100,000 miles (without a flat tire!) to all four corners of the United States. I met people, from the most illiterate black boy who ever caddied in Florida to the Duke and Duchess of Windsor. I learned the difference between winning and losing, between glory and obscurity, happiness and heartbreak.

I was catapulted into a world for which a college education would never have fitted me. I found it full of inconsistencies beyond my reasoning powers. It laughed at things I did not think funny. It took seriously what I laughed at. It emphasized off-beats and forgot down-beats. I was a four-year-old in her first day at kindergarten.

2

Golf galleries have a privilege of intimacy with players enjoyed by the spectators of no other sport. Many a man has jostled Bob Jones's elbow during the National Open who wouldn't have come within drop-kick distance of Red Grange in action.

"Don't galleries ever bother you?" is a stock question of strangers. They have visions of thousands of people rippling over the course and upsetting concentration. But I act Miss Strong Nerves and say, "No, the more the merrier. Can't play without a gallery." I smile when I say it.

Galleries are amusing. I've found that a goodly proportion of their components have interests in the competition aside from the golf. Galleries, like Gaul, are divided, and there are moments when I wish two parts would stay home. There are always those whose chief concern is in the shot-making. I hold a



place in my heart for them. There are also those who adore gossiping in whispers. (Golfing etiquette dictates that spectator conversation be whispered.) And there are always the curious, who fall into sand traps and get in the way generally. They sometimes get their pictures in the papers, being carried out on a stretcher after getting konked by the champ's tee shot off Number Ten.

Galleries get the strange impression that walking beside you as you approach that crucial chip shot makes them buddies from 'way back. "Remember me?" they'll say on a course in Cleveland in the

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novel will take
it to her heart

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summer of '43. "I met you at Palm Beach in '40."

"Oh, of course," you reply, trying to avoid that vacant look. "Wasn't I horrible that day against Jameson?"

"I saw you play Kirby." That mixes things up, because I never played Kirby at Palm Beach. So I start talking about the weather and continue avoiding that vacant look. They say Hagen had a wonderful memory for people. The best I can do is to remember the proper procedure when I forget.

The frankness of the spectators is appalling. I've had some outstanding comments made on my ap-



pearance at Palm Beach. Appearance counts more at Palm Beach, I suppose. "You're fatter this year, aren't you?" said one gracious gentleman to me as I was about to make an important sand-trap shot.

A proud papa whose offspring must have precocity equal to that of Baby Snooks said grinningly to me one day when I was practicing, "You know what my little girl said about you yesterday?"

I anticipated something highly complimentary, so I gave him my best front-page smile. "No," I said, "what did your little girl say?"

"Well," he tittered, "she said 'Daddy, is that a sourpuss over there?'"

Players are regarded somewhat as museum pieces. It's rather startling to walk by someone and hear, "I think she looks horrid in that plaid skirt, don't you?" or "I hear she's been out with that awful fellow from Kenosha."

I was involved in one of those storybook situations in a match in Milwaukee in 1940—the hushed crowd, the important putt! I had just leaned over my ball when some bright-eyed female whispered very audibly to a friend, "I bet she shaves her legs."

I gave up the problem of my appearance after that, tending to only the more important details which would be fuel for chatter. They are: (1) that my slip doesn't show; (2) that my hair is combed; (3) that my skirt does not cause any immodest exposure; (4) that I cannot possibly be classed as a "sweater girl."

Beyond that I am completely mystified as to how to win a gallery to my side. It's an unpleasant feeling, having a gallery pull against one.

I say that, recalling the long walk I had one March day after Dot Traung had beaten me eight and

seven in the Pebble Beach invitational final. I was eighteen then, and so anxious to succeed in golf that if someone had told me Requisite No. 1 was to swim the Catalina Channel with a niblick in my hand I would have done it.

So when a Hollywood actor's agent said to me, "Listen, you want to know how you can capitalize on that frozen puss of yours?" my ears were as big as bunkers.

"I'm in the show business, see," he said. "I know what brings out the crowds. Be mean as hell. Don't crack that mug as long as you're on the course. Off the course, swell. After the match be friendly. You've already got color. But you can have more."

I stammered that someone had told me once that it was only a game, but he reassured me, "You think they don't like to see you act that way? God, they love it! They've got to have something to talk about."

So I turned tough guy. I learned how to beat clubheads into the ground in disgust. I developed the meanest look in golf. But when I walked the half mile from the eleventh green, where Traung had finished me, back to the clubhouse, only two people offered me condolences. And they were dutiful relatives.

Somebody told me later that the way to become a gallery darling was to flash that sweet smile every time I missed a shot. I tried that, too, and very shortly people came to me and said, "What the hell's wrong with you? Don't you care whether you win or lose?"

Such inconsistency of the stomping hordes probably prompted the late Marion Miley to utter this despondent paragraph:—

"Some day I'm going to play in a golf tournament where people won't accuse me of not trying or of trying too hard, where they won't say 'She was up too late last night' or 'She drinks too much,' and



where I can just play for fun, and winning or losing won't matter. Where will the tournament be? In my own backyard. There'll be a fence around it and I'll be playing by myself."

Despite all this I like galleries. They appeal to my egotism. They make great newsreel shots. They give a tournament life.

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THE *Atlantic* BOOKSHELF

THE PERIPATETIC REVIEWER

by EDWARD WEEKS

READING on a trans-Atlantic plane is not as easy as I thought. This is not because of any bumps, for going and returning my flights were more level than any ride I have had on a streamlined train; no, the difference is a difference of rhythm. Personally, I find reading on trains one of the pleasures of our age: you are quite beyond reach and the rhythm stimulates your thinking. But, physically, the effect is very different from that projectile vibration of the big four motors of the Clipper. They jar your mind just enough to make reading a conscious effort.

"Next time, take a little book with you," said a man who had made six crossings; "a book like *Trivia* which you can enjoy in paragraphs. Read a little, then tilt your head back and relax." I noticed that there were three copies of *U. S. Foreign Policy*, all in English hands — and a useful importation; the chaplain had his New Testament, the man from Scotland Yard a novel of John Buchan's, and I an unbound copy of John Marquand's latest. Such was the flying library on H. M. *Berwyck*.

The British press

On the train to London we had our first look at the English newspapers. Laurence Winship, the managing editor of the *Boston Globe*, who sat beside me, kept muttering to himself, "What a job — I wish my copy desk could see this — What a job!" Through his eyes I began to appreciate what the English journalists have done. Into four pages of seven columns each they have compressed forty minutes of reading. I timed myself often, and that is what it took to consume the *Telegram*, the *Times*, or the *Daily Mail*.

It is slow reading, but good. The war news is analyzed objectively and is supplemented by action stories — "the skin and bleed" — wired back by the reporters with the troops. You notice at once how much space is being given to American news. And you notice that every story has been shortened without losing the graphic touch. The murder in St.

John's Wood or the juicy divorce gets two paragraphs where it once had two columns. The personals — those short stories in embryo — are in tiny type; the comics, which came in with the American Army, are held down to four abbreviated strips. Gradually you realize why you are reading so slowly. By the skillful use of smaller types and by dispensing with headlines, the editor has crowded literally thousands more words on every page.

London papers evidently lack the space and enthusiasm for our columnists. They have not produced a military critic as hardheaded and as penetrating as Lieutenant Colonel Charles Repington — but neither have we. I could find no one writing such colloquial and graphic reports of the British troops as Ernie Pyle has done of the Americans in the field. Steinbeck's copy was occasionally being reprinted in London; Peter Fleming and Evelyn Waugh, both of whom are with the British Army in the Middle East, will have to go some to match his pace.

Among the signed dispatches, I hunted hard in an effort to find new traces of that adventurous British talent — the talent which made Henry Nevinson's dispatches from the Belgian Congo, Greece, and Flanders and H. M. Tomlinson's marine writing such things of beauty. There were suppressed poets in those men who made English journalism the richer.

The dispatches from Montgomery's Eighth Army which caught my eye were written by Evelyn Montague. He was brought up in the *Manchester Guardian* tradition. His father was Scott's chief assistant, C. E. Montague, whose two books, *Disenchantment* and *Rough Justice*, spoke so eloquently of the hopes which we managed to lose after 1918. Now his son carries on with the most famous British army since Wellington's, and his prose has that touch of irony which is too often squeezed out of our daily reporting — as, for instance, when speaking of a momentary hot spot in the Sicilian campaign, young Montague wrote:—

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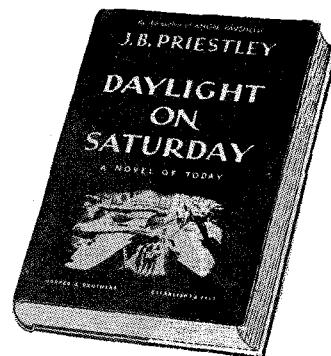
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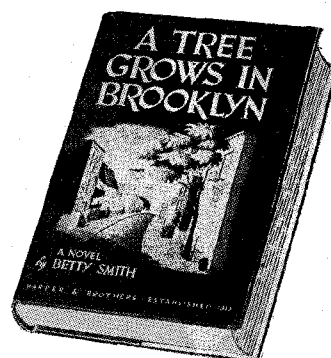
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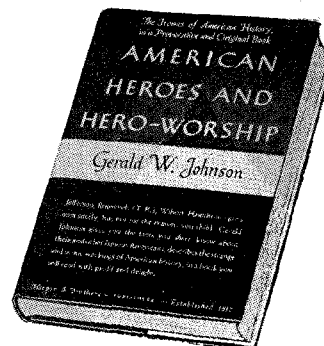
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AMERICAN HEROES AND HERO-WORSHIP

By **GERALD W. JOHNSON**



YANKEE FROM OLYMPUS

The Story of Justice Holmes

by CATHERINE DRINKER BOWEN

FOREWORD. — The story of Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes is the story of his country. The narrative cannot begin with the flat date of his birth — 1841. This was a man whose presence carried tradition; over his shoulder one catches sight of his ancestors. His roots reached deep into American earth; it was the strength of these roots that permitted so splendid a flowering.

To know Judge Holmes at eighty — courtly, witty, scholarly, kind — it is well to have acquaintance with his Calvinist grandfather, Abiel Holmes, with his handsome, worldly great-grandfather, Judge Wendell, with his mother from whom he inherited, he said, “a trace of melancholy.” Above all, it is well to know his father, the sturdy Yankee who wrote bad verse and good books — professor of anatomy, talkative five-foot-three Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table who lived on applause and said so with engaging frankness.

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ABIEL the annalist was eager with his news. Extraordinary mechanical inventions were appearing in factories and on farms; news of them tempted men into wild financial speculation. Had Oliver heard of McCormick’s new machine, drawn by horses, which reaped a field in a third the time it used to take? The screw propeller and iron were now used in ships. One of the strangest things of all had been the sending of a shipload of ice to Calcutta. Ice! Loaded from the Long Wharf in the heat of August, Abiel said wonderingly. Sam Eliot’s new house on Beacon Street actually had a box constructed to hold ice; it kept the meat in warm weather. The house had a bathtub too, with running water. Everyone in town went calling on the Eliots, pretending they came to see the fine English furniture and European paintings. But it was the icebox and bathtub they really talked about.

His own church, Abiel said, was prospering. But the country at large seemed in the grip of a feverish excitement; it was like a body that had grown too fast for its

heart. Men blamed it on Andrew Jackson. Jackson had been too long in the White House. Power was dangerous; there was rumor he might accept a third term and the Whigs were busy organizing for the 1836 election.

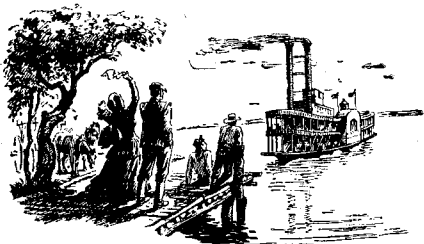
It was a pity Oliver had missed Jackson’s visit to Cambridge in June of ’33. The University had given him a degree over the protest of half the Corporation. Abiel had gone to the ceremony; in spite of himself he must confess the man had something about him that inspired respect. He was lean as a greyhound and held himself like a soldier; his long white hair streamed in the breeze like a flag of battle. He had answered President Quincy’s oration briefly; Cambridge had been surprised there was no backwoods accent. The cheering afterward had been tremendous. Abiel had caught himself shouting with the rest although he approved none of Jackson’s policies, domestic or foreign.

People sought stimulation as drunkards seek liquor; Abiel suspected they even came to church to hear theatrical preaching rather than to attain calm and humility before the Lord. Crazy sects were making converts. Had Oliver heard the latest on the Groaners, the Campbellites, the Shakers? Out West they had huge camp meetings, orgies of excitement, and dared to call it religion.

Oliver had not heard these things, nor was he abashed by the recital. All his life, humility had been preached to him; since his return home his younger brother-in-law, the Reverend Charles Wentworth Upham, had joined his voice to the chorus. But to Oliver, his father’s news meant merely that the world was moving. Oliver desired not to censure or impede, but to move with it.

What he immediately sought was a medical degree from Harvard. With six months in which to win it, he decided on a local subject for his dissertation: “Intermittent Fever in New England.” Page by page he examined the

CATHERINE DRINKER BOWEN, essayist and the biographer of Tchaikovsky and the Rubinshteyns, grew up in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. She now lives in Bryn Mawr. For more than three years she has been at work on her biography of Justice Holmes. She says, “Why did I, being neither lawyer nor professional philosopher, undertake to write a book about Justice Holmes? I think because these are times when it is good to know about Americans who believed in their country, who worked for their country with all their might, and who had a good time doing it. I wanted to throw myself into the long study of just such a man. ‘Life is action and passion,’ Justice Holmes said. ‘I think it is required of a man that he should share the action and passion of his time at peril of being judged not to have lived.’” Certainly Holmes shared the action and passion of his country on the soldier’s field as well as on the judge’s bench. And the *Atlantic* and its readers are privileged to share with Mrs. Bowen her study of that splendid man and servant of his country.



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works of old Colonial writers, recording their every mention of fever, omitting only the moralistic treatises of the Reverend Cotton Mather — which, Oliver observed, were more likely to cause a fever than to cure one.

He handed in his essay and a few days later announced the result to the brother-in-law who had cautioned against the sin of pride: —

TO CHARLES W. UPHAM

BOSTON, August 4, 1836

MY VERY DEAR SIR, — The lesson of humility which you were anxious I should receive has found some other customers. The Boylston prize was almost unanimously awarded to my dissertation. . . . It is somewhat pleasant to have cut out a fifty-dollar prize under the guns of two old blazers [Dr. Haxall, of Virginia, and Dr. Bell, of New Hampshire], who have each of them swamped their competitors in preceding trials.

Oliver had a wonderful time that Commencement season. It was Harvard's two hundredth anniversary and the festivities were memorable. At the alumni dinner Oliver, standing on a chair, was immensely surprised to find himself singing a solo. And at the Phi Beta Kappa celebration, Oliver recited a poem he had written for the occasion. It was no mean feat; the recital took an hour and ten minutes. Oliver declaimed the whole from memory, standing on the platform, stretched to his full height of five feet three. The audience loved it. When Oliver mentioned a local name — Dr. Jackson's for instance — they clapped loudly, and when he said something funny they cheered.

Abiel Holmes, hearing of all this, was disturbed. Oliver's Boylston Prize had not won for him half the applause these foolish performances were receiving. To be known as a wit could be of no possible advantage to a physician; it might even militate against him. This frivolity of Oliver's seemed not to decrease with age but rather to flaunt itself. Moreover, people seemed unable to resist it.

Abiel determined to speak to his son, caution him against being too free with his quips and his puns. But when he told his wife, she shook her head doubtfully, reminding Abiel that his son was no longer a boy, to be advised, scolded, protected. Oliver was twenty-seven. He was a grown man, and must follow his nature.

10

OLIVER moved across the river to Boston, rented a room, and set himself up as a physician. A lamp burned behind his office door, plainly to be seen through the glass, signifying that night and day the smallest favors — or fevers, said young Dr. Holmes — were welcome. A drunken young man put his fist through the door one night and broke the light, but beyond this nobody noticed either light or doctor's sign.

Dr. Holmes was not humbled by this neglect of the public. Attendance on the sick distressed him; he felt sorry for them. He busied himself writing medical essays; as if one Boylston Prize were not enough, he decided to

try for another. He wrote on neuralgia and on direct exploration in medical practice. It seemed to him the profession was too wrapped in theory and the dusty prestige of learning. Why could not the doctors recount what they *saw* in the hospitals, what they felt with their hands and smelled with their noses, rather than what some long-dead medico had thought about?

Before the New Year of 1837 Oliver had the satisfaction of seeing his poems in print, published in Boston in a small volume. His verses had been printed before, in college Annuals and various modest collections, but unsigned, "in order that," Oliver wrote a classmate, "nobody might suppose I was ambitious of being considered a regular scribbler." Now with a Boylston Prize to his credit and a physician's sign on his door, he risked recognition and the obloquy of being called a wit. In the contents of the little volume was "Old Ironsides"; there was a poem on the Cambridge Churchyard, there was one on the September Gale of 1815, when Oliver's Sunday breeches had been torn from the line in the parsonage yard.

And there was a poem about an old man Oliver had often seen in the street, a venerable relic of the Revolution, who had helped throw the tea overboard in Boston Harbor. Major Melville, his name was, and the poem was called "The Last Leaf." It described the old man, tottering about —

. . . a crook is in his back,
And a melancholy crack
In his laugh.

I know it is a sin
For me to sit and grin
At him here;
But the old three-cornered hat,
And the breeches, and all that,
Are so queer!

And if I should live to be
The last leaf upon the tree
In the spring, —
Let them smile, as I do now,
At the old forsaken bough
Where I cling.

Of the whole volume, Abiel Holmes preferred this poem. It was like himself, he said, smiling. A relic of the past, of times and ways that were vanishing. "Nonsense!" his sons replied stoutly. "Father, you will live to be a hundred."

Abiel shook his head. He still preached occasionally. In January, 1837, Abiel preached a sermon that touched his congregation deeply. Its subject was: "The vanity of life, a reason for seeking a portion in Heaven." Abiel did not say it was his farewell. Perhaps he did not himself realize it. But all who heard it felt a prophetic note.

They were not mistaken. It was Abiel's last sermon. That very week he was taken ill. It was not an illness Abiel's son could diagnose or cure. It was more a weakness, a fading away. Abiel Holmes, at seventy-three, was preparing for his departure. He was not bedridden; he

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walked slowly about the house, sitting in the evenings before the fire while his wife or sons read aloud from the Bible, from Saurin's *Sermons*, or sometimes, to Abiel's great pleasure, from *The Annals of America*.

Late in the spring of 1837, Abiel had a stroke. It left him helpless; he could speak only with difficulty. Sally Holmes, strong, competent, tended him, her sons helping when a man's arm was needed. Sally was sixty-eight; she seemed not a day over fifty. Her gray hair curled crisply at the edges, her brown eyes were bright as ever, her skin pink. When Nellie, carrying basins and trays up from the kitchen, wept audibly at the sickroom door, her mistress rebuked her: "Have you forgotten that Dr. Holmes loves a cheerful face?"

Sitting by her husband's side, Sally waited through the long hours. When Abiel roused, she seemed to know by a touch of the hand what he wanted. Once Oliver, coming in the door, stood while she finished singing softly Abiel's own hymn that he had written long ago about his Meetinghouse:—

Thy flock, Immanuel, here was fed,
In pastures green and fair,
Beside still waters gently led,
And thine the shepherd's care.

.....
Here may the church thy cause maintain,
Thy truth with peace and love,
Till her last earth-born live again
With the first-born above.

On Sunday morning, June 4, the watchers round the bedside noticed a change. Abiel was restless, his lips moved. Oliver, leaning over the bed, caught the words his father was trying to articulate. "If any have injured me, let the injuries . . . let the injuries . . ."

Oliver repeated the words aloud, looking at his mother with a puzzled face. Sally Holmes did not hesitate. She stood up and spoke clearly to her husband: "*If any have injured me, let their injuries be written in sand.*"

Abiel's eyes opened, his lips moved in acquiescence. On the dark plank floor the sun made a pattern by the window; outside, maple leaves stirred in the breeze. A church bell sounded, then another. Sally Holmes, her eyes on her husband's face, waited for the bell from his old Meetinghouse. Among many voices she would know it and so, she was aware, would her husband.

The bell spoke. Abiel turned his face toward the sound, and died.

After his father's funeral, Oliver Holmes returned to Boston. All that winter of 1837-1838, Dr. Oliver Holmes waited for patients in his Boston office with the plate-glass door. When patients did not come he wrote poetry and more medical essays and spent long hours at the Massachusetts General Hospital, following his beloved Dr. Jackson on his rounds, asking questions and refusing to be satisfied with the answers. Why did so many women die of childbed fever? Dr. Bigelow, a splendid surgeon, went from bed to bed in his workmanlike, bloodstained frock coat, using his instruments skillfully, then wiping them on an old towel and returning them to his bag. Why, out of

a dozen strong young women, did six die? Oliver made himself a nuisance with his questions. He filled whole notebooks with details of these deaths and still his questions haunted him, unanswered.

In the evenings when he was not working, Oliver was restless. He supped out whenever he was invited. Boston had supper at six and called it "tea." It was natural that Oliver should go often to the Jacksons', both to the Doctor's and to his brother the Judge's on Bedford Place. Amelia Jackson was as charming as ever. Phineas Barnes married and Oliver wrote him a long letter: "And so you are married. I wish I were, too. I have flirted and written poetry long enough. . . . I have several very nice young women in my eye. . . ."

It was a year or two before the several very nice young women were narrowed down to one and Oliver's ambition was gratified. On the fifteenth of June, Boston enjoyed a delightful wedding. Miss Amelia Jackson married Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes. The guests, leaving their carriages up the hill on Beacon Street, walked down a narrow, cobbled street to the pillared granite portico of King's Chapel. Everybody was cousin to someone in the next pew, or if they were not related their grandparents had been intimately acquainted. The Jackson connection was enormous; the church could barely hold the Wendells, Olivers, Quincys.

At Judge Jackson's after the ceremony, the collation was magnificent. Jellies and sillabubs, iced cream in molds, fruits and meats of every description — and wine of course in abundance. Replete with food, wine, love, and the good will of their friends and relations, Oliver and his bride drove gayly off in the Judge's carriage.

It was autumn when they returned to Boston; on the Common the trees were bare of leaves, the cobbles glistened with a hard November rain. They went straight to their own house on Montgomery Place. Amelia had discovered it months ago; her father had bought it and given it to her, a three-story brick house just off the Common to the east, with ample room to raise a family. It had gaslight, running water in the kitchen sink, and it was set in a pleasant, quiet spot, a sort of dead-end court with a brick wall around it, a gate in front that gave down three steps into the street. Number 8 Montgomery Place, the address was.

Amelia plunged happily into housekeeping. She had a talent for domesticity, for making a man comfortable. In all her duties, she displayed exemplary promptness. Eight months and twenty-three days after her marriage — the date was March 8, 1841 — she gave birth to a son. Dr. Holmes sat down and wrote to everyone he knew, varying his announcement with a skill that pleased him quite as much as it pleased the recipients of the letters.

There was no hesitancy over the name; what could it be but Oliver Wendell Holmes? They would call him Wendell, his father decided; he himself had always preferred it to Oliver. Looking into the cradle upon the son that bore his name, young Dr. Holmes was content.

The months passed; as Christmas approached, Holmes remembered his friend Phineas Barnes. "I believe you learned, when you were here," he wrote Barnes, "that

there was a second edition of your old acquaintance, an o.w.h. . . ."

He was developing a virtuosity in these announcements, Holmes told himself with satisfaction. Much neater than his own father's announcement of his — Oliver Holmes's — birth in the old almanac: "*Aug. 29 . . . son b.*" — with nothing but an = to emphasize the importance of the event.

o.w.h. Small print and no capital letters. In his cradle o.w.h. lay quiet and noisy by turns, as a healthy baby should. *o.w.h., a second edition.* There was none to prophesy that the letters might grow until the whole country might see them, and countries beyond the water: —

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES, Chief Justice of Massachusetts, author of *The Common Law*, Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

11

o.w.h. was born into a Union of twenty-seven states, presided over by the Whig, General William Henry Harrison. Daniel Webster was Secretary of State. Settled outside of town in his country place, Marshfield, he was Boston's hero more than ever. Shipowners and mill-owners could count on his shrewd, eloquent support. The China trade flourished; clippers, slim and beautiful, raced from Minot's Light eastward to Liverpool.

In Lawrence and Lowell, spindles whirled. Every sound businessman knew the twelve-hour day was an excellent thing for workers. "The morals of the operatives," one of them told the Massachusetts Legislature, "will necessarily suffer if longer absent from the wholesome discipline of factory life."

In the middle states the working day had been reduced to ten hours — a dangerous move. Had not man long ago been commanded to eat bread in the sweat of his face? The five Lawrence brothers, all rich, all philanthropic, were sure of it. They themselves had never shirked hard work. Hard work was a Puritan principle, a Calvinistic inheritance. "In Adam's fall, We sinned all." Adam's fall could be expiated not alone by prayer and churchgoing but by hard, continuous labor. If the labor resulted in money, so much the better.

Money, work, and God. A reasonable trinity, one that America could worship with enthusiasm. Work, money, God: a new religion took hold of the American Union, to rule a hundred years and more.

And yet — voices rose in protest. In New England, in Boston, the very hold and center of the new worship, voices cried Nay. Combat this new materialism not with prayer but with good works! Reform the prisons, the insane asylums. Give rights to women. Abolish debtors' prisons, drunkenness, pauperism. Be merciful to the deaf and dumb, teach the blind to live. Samuel Gridley Howe, the mantle of his Greek adventures still upon him, took over his father's house in South Boston and, with his spirited young wife Julia Ward, taught the blind until the whole country talked of sightless, deaf, speechless Laura Bridgman.

Reform, reform! And if reform move too slowly for the winged spirit, withdraw from wickedness to Brook Farm and dig the soil, to Fruitlands and read Goethe, enjoying the perfect life. "Not a reading man but has a draft of a new community in his waistcoat pocket," Emerson wrote to Carlyle. "I am gently mad myself, and am resolved to live cleanly." Dr. Holmes's schoolmate of the sinuous neck, Margaret Fuller, translated the *Conversations with Goethe*, wrote midnight letters to Beethoven, and held her own *Conversations* in West Street. It was her mission to GROW, she said, and she hastened to fulfill it.

It was all mad, foolish, inspired — and to Dr. Holmes it held no appeal whatever. Of all the literary group about to burst into flower — Emerson, Lowell, Longfellow, Motley, and the rest — Dr. Holmes was the only one with a scientific training. It removed him from these others, leaving him neither time nor faith for fancy new remedies, spiritual or social. It seemed to Holmes that the great men were not in the reformer's pulpit — they were at Harvard. Dr. Bigelow in medicine, Dr. Warren in anatomy, Asa Gray in natural history. All over the East, scientists were organizing into groups for closer intercourse and the exchange of ideas; in Boston the American Society of Geologists held its first meeting, the Lowell Institute its first forum.

In the hospital, the sight of people dying left Dr. Holmes no heart to reform the living; first of all a way must be found to make men stay alive. Every autumn, scores of people died in Boston from typhoid fever. Charles Sumner had it. When he recovered, people were surprised to see him looking quite plump. "Almost human," Julia Howe said. In summer Asiatic cholera came to town. The deaths from puerperal fever continued to distress Holmes. These mothers were young and strong. Why should they die?

People said homeopathy would cure puerperal fever. Holmes loathed homeopathy. He gave two lectures against it, angry, witty lectures, called it a pseudo-science, and all the while continued his studies of puerperal fever. In England, Scotland, Vienna, doctors had already suspected the fever was contagious. But American doctors did not read German and there was little scientific exchange with England. Lister was a boy in his teens, the germ theory was unknown, contagiousness was proved only by the observations of common sense and the deductions of what was called medical logic.

Common sense happened to be the quality Dr. Holmes possessed perhaps beyond all other qualities. Slowly, painstakingly, he collected his evidence. Puerperal fever was carried from bed to bed by doctors, nurses, midwives. No one knew whether the physician carried infection in the atmosphere about him or by direct application of hand to surface. The fact remained that the physician who came to a delivery direct from the autopsy room brought death to his patient. Even a change of clothes was not sufficient safeguard. Physicians whose maternity patients showed a high mortality rate confessed that even though they left their coats in the autopsy room, the mother died after they had attended her.

Only the courage of a few physicians had brought this

to light. Dr. Gordon of Scotland had confessed the disease was as communicable as smallpox, and that he had himself "been the disagreeable means of carrying it to a great number of women." One midwife lost sixteen mothers in a month; others in the same district had none infected with the fever. A doctor in England, after seven patients died from the fever, changed his clothes, underwent "a thorough purification." Yet his next patient died. Could the contagion be carried in his gloves? The doctor discarded them. Could it be in the instruments with which he had given enemas to the women, using the same instruments from bed to bed?

But behind those physicians who dared make public their failures lay a dark regiment of unpublished deaths. A doctor whose patients die by the half dozen soon loses his practice. Better for the doctor to say the deaths were unavoidable.

It was a terrible body of evidence. Case by case, citing name, date, place, circumstance, Dr. Holmes put it all down. He called his paper "The Contagiousness of Puerperal Fever," and read it in Boston before the Society for Medical Improvement. In April, 1843, he published it in the *New England Quarterly Journal of Medicine and Surgery*.

The profession rose up in arms, hurling angry refutation. Dr. Holmes had trod on too many toes. Reputations were at stake; the controversy would rage for years. Now and again Holmes answered his critics. "I am too much in earnest for either humility or vanity, but I do entreat those who hold the keys of life and death to listen to me also for this once. I ask no personal favor; but I beg to be heard in behalf of those women whose lives are at stake, until some stronger voice shall plead for them."

Holmes knew well enough it was dangerous for him to make fun of doctors, but he could not resist it. In 1855 his beloved Dr. Jackson was compiling a book, *Letters to a Young Physician*. "Enter the sick room with grave demeanor," wrote Jackson. "Then your patient will know you feel for him. But leave with a cheerful countenance, so the sick man will think his case is not too serious."

Holmes thought it over; how wise Dr. Jackson was! Would he himself ever reach this point of experience? He himself had written some advice to young physicians. The result was so far from serious that it would have made Abiel Holmes turn in his grave: —

If the poor victim needs must be percussed,
Don't make an anvil of his aching bust;
(Doctors exist within a hundred miles
Who thump a thorax as they'd hammer piles);
So of your questions: don't in mercy try
To pump your patient absolutely dry;
He's not a mollusk squirming on a dish,
You're not Agassiz, and he's not a fish.

Boston read the verses and rocked with mirth. Was it any wonder Dr. Holmes was not sent for by the solvent sick? The insolvent he treated daily in the wards on Grove Street; they did not read books. But the ladies of Chauncy Street and Bedford Square, enjoying the vapors or something more serious, did not relish the advent into

their sickroom of a small, sprightly man who might at any moment break out with a pun. Even anatomy, in which Holmes was deeply, seriously interested, tempted him to farce: —

I was sitting with my microscope, upon my parlor rug,
With a very heavy quarto and a very lively bug.

With it all, no one could possibly have said Dr. Holmes lacked seriousness of purpose. No one did say it. Wit bubbled from him; he could no more stop it than he could stop the blood flowing in his veins. He hated solemnity; he had seen too much of it in his youth and the reaction was lasting. Sanctimonious people made him sneeze, he said, and go home with a violent cold.

But these were times of reform, of an evangelicism that was very vocal in high places. On the front page of Garrison's *Liberator* the ugly word "secession" was flaunted. Dr. Holmes shook his head; he was too much the scientist to have faith in extreme measures. Moreover the emotionalism of the Abolitionists made him suspect their sincerity — Burleigh with his long hair, Wright with his wild gesticulations. When Holmes did not come out openly for antislavery and temperance reform, James Russell Lowell, ten years his junior and as yet only an acquaintance, wrote him a long, severe letter, charging him with light-mindedness, with making frivolous poems in a time of national stress: —

I listen to your suggestions with great respect [Holmes replied]. I mean to reflect upon them, and I hope to gain something from them. But I must say, with regard to art and the management of my own powers, I think I shall in the main follow my own judgment and taste rather than mould myself upon those of others. . . . As years creep over me . . . I shall not be afraid of gayety more than of old, but I shall have more courage to be serious. . . . Let me try to improve and please my fellow-men after my own fashion at present. . . .

Holmes did not lack the capacity for indignation. But at the moment he was occupied with men's physical rather than their moral ills. The sufferings of the sick, both men and animals, had always affected him strongly. When he needed a freshly killed rabbit for dissection he ran out of the room, asked Dr. Cheever to kill it, and begged him not to let the rabbit squeak. The operating room, the surgeon's knife, still filled him with horror.

It was natural he should become intensely interested in experiments being carried on in Boston by a dentist, Dr. Morton, to produce insensibility by inhaling ether. Dr. Morton had tried ether on himself, sealing himself in a room and falling unconscious. In September of 1846, Morton used ether while pulling a patient's tooth. Shortly afterward, Dr. Warren of the Harvard Medical School asked Morton to give ether to a patient about to undergo an operation in the hospital.

The experiment was successful. Dr. Holmes was as happy as though it had been made on himself. After the drunken screams of former patients, what heavenly mercy was this! If only he could have helped! He could not — but he could suggest words for the men who made the discovery. He sat down and wrote to Dr. Morton: —

BOSTON, Nov. 21, 1846

MY DEAR SIR: Everybody wants to have a hand in a great discovery. All I will do is to give you a hint or two as to names — or the name — to be applied to the state produced, and the agent.

The state should, I think, be called "Anaesthesia." This signifies insensibility — more particularly (as used by Linnæus and Cullen) to objects of touch. . . .

The adjective will be Anaesthetic. . . .

The words antineuric, aneuric, neuro-leptic, neurolepsia, neurostasis, etc., seem too anatomical; whereas the change is a physiological one. I throw them out for consideration.

I would have a name pretty soon, and consult some accomplished scholar, such as President Everett or Dr. Bigelow, senior, before fixing upon the terms, which *will be repeated by the tongues of every civilized race of mankind*. You could mention these words which I suggest, for their consideration; but there may be others more appropriate and agreeable.

Yours respectfully,

O. W. HOLMES.

"Consult the president of Harvard." It was the sovereign remedy. How many of Dr. Holmes's family belonged to Harvard University! Before he was born, his great-uncle, Jonathan Jackson, had been treasurer of Harvard — a position much honored in Boston. Judge Wendell had been a Fellow and Judge Jackson — Holmes's father-in-law — was an Overseer. President Josiah Quincy had been a Holmes cousin.

In the spring of 1847, President Everett and the Corporation named Dr. Holmes Professor of Anatomy and Physiology in the Medical School. It was an enormous satisfaction. Holmes's father-in-law had thrown out hints that he might expect the appointment; so had the doctors Jackson and Bigelow. Now it was accomplished. His life was laid out as he would have chosen. The path stretched ahead, broad and brisk, filled with honorable business that a man must bestir himself daily, hourly, to fulfill.

12

LOOKING at his family, Dr. Holmes felt a fervent satisfaction. He had two boys now, to enroll as future sons of Harvard. Wendell had a brother: Edward Jackson Holmes, born October 7, 1846.

Two boys and a girl; the family was complete. The household grew and prospered. When Wendell Holmes was ten he was taken from Mr. Sullivan's classes in the basement of Park Street Church and sent across the Common to Mr. Dixwell's new school on Boylston Place. Epes Sargent Dixwell had been a master at the Latin School. Everyone knew the Dixwells. They lived in Cambridge in a big house on Garden Street. Mrs. Dixwell was a Bowditch, granddaughter of that great navigator whose name Dr. Holmes had long ago said was such a powerful introduction on the continent of Europe. Epes Dixwell himself had been two classes ahead of Dr. Holmes at Harvard and had carried away all the honors available.

The doctor was delighted to send his son to school

under his old friend who was such a splendid classical scholar. Wendell Holmes himself did not care much where he went to school. He was a sturdy boy, tall and strong, with clear, alert blue-gray eyes, high color, and dark shiny hair that never kept its part but fell over his high forehead. Absently his mother would push it back; in two minutes it was down again. In the mornings, Wendell had not far to walk. Up to the Granary Burying Ground, past the Paddock elms, turning left at Park Street Church, then down along the Common to Boylston Street. Beyond that were farm land, marsh, and slum. All winter he took his sled to school, and in the afternoons raced his friends down the long coast through the Common.

In spring when the weather opened, things happened on Boston Common. Tukey was City Marshal then, and Chief of Police. A large, handsome, sportive man, graduate of Harvard, he was addressed as Esquire. Boston loved him because he gave it plenty of shows. The Light Guard paraded the Common, Flagg's Boston Brass Band blew their shining horns.

When the line was opened connecting Boston with railroads to Canada and the West, Tukey put on a Railroad Jubilee that lasted three whole days. Boston had never seen such an affair; it put the Water Festival in the shade entirely. Why, said Boston citizens, the Great Exhibition over in London, Queen Victoria's Glass Palace itself, could not compete with the Railroad Jubilee! Whole books were written about it. The parades were endless; floats illustrated every means of transportation from oxcart and prairie schooner to the newest, shiniest steam engine. On the Common there was a huge dinner tent where speech followed speech. How Dr. Holmes missed writing a poem for the occasion was a simple mystery. England, said the citizens of Boston, would hear of this Festival. "We shall soon see," local news-sheets said proudly, "in English journals, the speeches delivered at our State House."

Just west of the Common was the Public Garden. Here the visiting circuses camped; the big tent could be entered at the corner of Beacon and Charles Streets. The great drawing card was the announcement that the elephants would bathe in the Frog Pond. It was a delirious business to stand and watch the huge beasts wade in to the end of their chains, fill their trunks with water, and then solemnly spray themselves down the backbone.

Two months of the summer the Holmes family spent in the Berkshire Hills, near Pittsfield. Grandmother Holmes had inherited two hundred and eighty acres from her father, Judge Wendell, who had bought thousands of acres from the Province of Massachusetts. Dr. Holmes built a house there, called Canoe Meadow. The children loved it. Wendell, starting off for an afternoon's fishing or going out with his pail to gather blueberries, met his mother and his little sister Amelia trundling the red wheelbarrow with soil for their little garden. "Great A and Little A" his father called the two.

Dr. Holmes still worked in the hospital wards on Grove Street, still fought his battle against puerperal fever. From Philadelphia, the doctors Meigs and Hodge con-

tinued their diatribes against him. Holmes did not reply. He was a professor in the Harvard Medical School; his main business was to lecture to his students — and he did it more than well. Harvard had two chairs of anatomy; the second, in Cambridge, was held by Jeffries Wyman, the brilliant microscopist and research man. Holmes admired Wyman enormously, and said so. The university had duplicated the chair, so that there existed almost side by side, as the *Anatomical Record* has it, “Wyman, the scientific anatomist with but few students, and Oliver Wendell Holmes, the poet anatomist, with many of them.”

Holmes, a born talker, could have lectured successfully on anything. In the early fifties he had gone on the Lyceum Circuit all over New England, but he had given it up as a waste of time and strength. He had been appointed lecturer one winter at the Lowell Institute. An old trouper, Dr. Holmes knew all the tricks and loved his trade. In the Medical School the students called him Uncle Oliver and flocked to his one o'clock lecture — the worst hour of the day. Other professors avoided it. By then the students had already listened to successive lectures on *materia medica*, chemistry, practice, and obstetrics — an hour to a lecture. They were weary to the bone. But they climbed the steep steps to Holmes's classroom door, pounded on it till the janitor unlocked it. Shouting and shoving, they stumbled down the steep steps to get the best seats in front.

On a table lay the cadaver, carried in on a board, often the worse for wear. Eliot's house on Beacon Street may have boasted an icebox, but the Medical School did not. Holmes stood by the table — tiny, sometimes gasping with asthma. He spoke without notes and believed in speaking simply. “We don't *ligate* arteries,” he said. “We *tie* them.” He was deeply in earnest; he loved anatomy. Moreover, the students knew that sooner or later, if they stayed awake, Uncle Oliver would be funny. One day, pointing to that part of the corpse which, if it had sat up, would undoubtedly have cushioned its owner against the table, “These, gentlemen,” said Holmes, “are the tuberosities of the ischia, on which man was designed to sit and survey the works of Creation.”

When men are old, and their teeth fall out, their faces seem to shorten. “No doubt,” Holmes told his students, “you have noticed the extraordinary way in which elderly people will suddenly shut up their faces like an accordion.” Dental plates had been invented some years before in Boston; Holmes was much interested in the marvels of dentistry. “Had the art been thus perfected in the last century,” he said, “we should not now see the Father of his Country, in Stuart's portrait, his attention divided between the cares of the State and the sustaining of his uppers in position.”

Holmes made his pictures and comparisons purposely, to fix the objects in the student's mind. But there was about his figures and metaphors a kind of enchantment, a gentle surprise that woke the student, did not make him laugh aloud but made him smile and remember the words forever. The microscopical coiled tube of a sweat gland Holmes compared to an elf's intestine. The mesentery

reminded him of his Grandfather Wendell's shirt ruffles.

When he said something good, Dr. Holmes was as pleased as his students. He took it home, repeated it at the evening tea table. He still loved to quote Dr. Louis:—

“Formez toujours les idées nettes.

Fuyez les à peu près.”

Wendell, sitting halfway down the table, knew the words by heart. He tried to ignore them — but he could not; they became part of him. “The difference between green and seasoned knowledge,” the doctor propounded, his cup halfway to his lips, “is great. Our American atmosphere is vocal with the flippant loquacity of half knowledge.”

That was good, and Dr. Holmes knew it. He set his cup down. “The difference —” he began again. Wendell, closing his mind automatically, retreated to a world of his own. When his father stopped talking, he would tell what had happened this morning when Mr. Dixwell asked Henry Bowditch to scan six lines of Virgil — that is, he would tell it if Amelia did not start talking first. Wendell talked fluently, once he got started, but shyness held him back, sometimes, from starting. Not so Amelia. Nothing held her back. Neddy was just as bad, but Neddy had inherited his father's asthma and wheezed when he began to speak. During the wheezing it was possible sometimes to step in. One thing was certain: whoever got the floor held it through the meal — and usually this person was Dr. Holmes. Mrs. Holmes listened, smiling, trying to stem the flood and give place to the children. No one knew who it was that started the custom of giving an extra helping of marmalade to the person who made the cleverest remark. But Wendell, watching his mother's face as she heaped jam on his plate, knew somehow that it was she who had split the conversation open, had given him his chance.

13

IN THE autumn of 1857, Wendell Holmes entered Harvard. The transition from Dixwell's Latin School to Harvard College was for him no revolution. He crossed the Charles River it was true; also, he lived no longer at home, being a boarder in Cambridge at the house of a Mr. Danforth. But he was doing what his father had done, what his uncles and cousins had done and were doing. Not to go to Harvard would have been eccentric; to go at sixteen was the rule. Wendell Phillips wrote a credo, called “Five Points of Massachusetts Decency.” Cousin Phillips's Abolitionism made him almost an outlaw from the conventional world; yet in his credo, Point Number Two was expressed with simple comprehensiveness:—

To be a Harvard man.

The Cambridge scene was little changed since Dr. Holmes's day. The horsecars rolled along Cambridge Street now, and there were three or four new college buildings. But Harvard Square was still unpaved; you walked on the hard mud under the trees. Across a field the Gambrel-roofed House still stood, benign and weath-

ered under its elms; in the old paneled library Uncle John and Grandmother Holmes were there to give tea to a freshman and his friends. In Holworthy Hall lived old Professor Sophocles, cooking his own meals and keeping his hens in a yard near-by. Persons favored with the present of an egg found on it in purple ink the name of the hen that laid it.

It was all very rural and neighborly. The University numbered about four hundred students, presided over by the Reverend Walker — a kindly, easy-going divine, reminiscent of President Kirkland, loving religion and his Sunday pulpit, loving Greek and Latin. To President Walker, education meant what it meant to Epes Dixwell; in the Harvard curriculum the classics maintained very definitely the place of honor. Young Professor Child tried desperately to interest the boys in Chaucer. But Cambridge, while recognizing vaguely that Child was a great scholar, considered his passion for Anglo-Saxon poets and old English ballads not only unnecessary but a little queer.

There was no choice of subjects; the elective system so laboriously inaugurated by Ticknor had been swept away during the administration of the Reverend Jared Sparks. President Walker followed Sparks, and where the curriculum was concerned, Walker desired above all to maintain a safe *status quo ante* — not difficult now that the elective system had been dispensed with.

There were dangerous new men on the teaching staff it was true; on Thursday mornings, Louis Agassiz strolled through the College Yard, smoking his cigar in sublime disregard of law and order. Covered with the honors of European scholarship, Agassiz had come to Harvard in 1848, every hair on his magnificent head bristling with energy, charm, genius. He talked with a strong Swiss accent and he did not care two straws for courses on Christian morals or the harmony of science and revealed religion. He was trying to find a place to house his zoological specimens, and had even opened a girls' school in Cambridge to raise money for the project.

Agassiz, however, spent little time at the college, being far more interested in scientific research than in his lectures. It was the same with Professor Asa Gray, the natural-history man. Gray talked much of a botanist he had met in England, named Charles Darwin, who had a theory concerning the origin and development of plant life. The two were in correspondence; Gray said Darwin's book would be out before long. Neither Gray's nor Agassiz's lectures were compulsory; students received no academic credits for attending. From President Walker's point of view this was a definite safeguard; the younger students were not exposed to dangerous ideas and the older ones got no credits for the lectures and stayed away in droves.

People said Professor Peirce, the mathematician and astronomer, had a kind of spiritual affinity with Agassiz. Benjamin Peirce was bearded like a lion; his dark eyes were fiery and within him one felt the same fury, the same exuberance, that was Agassiz's. Two years before Wendell entered college, Peirce had published his great volume, *Analytic Mechanics*; Europe and America acclaimed him.

The Peirces had always lived in Cambridge, up on Quincy Street; the neighbors said mathematics was as natural to the professor as eating.

President Walker sometimes wondered how these three men — Agassiz, Gray, and Peirce — had drifted into professorships in a college that was designed to turn out ministers of the gospel or Educated Gentlemen. None of the three men was an atheist — yet everything they said and the way they said it was upsetting to boys reared in good Orthodox surroundings.

It was an extraordinary situation. A more brilliant group of scientists, scholars, and creative writers had never congregated about a university — yet Harvard clung to her ancient rules, doing all she could, apparently, to prevent these professors from functioning fully. The new spirit of science was abroad — but so far, there was no real tie-up with education. Josiah Cooke, the new chemistry professor, used "laboratory" in his course. The heaven was beginning to work. But in Wendell Holmes's college years it was only just beginning.

For him, contact with these men of science was inspiring, but it was by no means a revelation. All three were members of the Saturday Club that dined each month at Parker's. Meeting Wendell on Cambridge lanes, they greeted him genially in the name of his father. So did Professor Lowell and Mr. Longfellow. Longfellow had resigned his professorship; it gave him no time to write, he said. He had recently married Tom Appleton's sister; his father-in-law had given him Craigie House. It was Longfellow House now. Wendell Holmes could have gone there — could have gone indeed to all these Cambridge houses and been welcomed in his father's name. But he did not go. Except for the Dixwells on Garden Street, he avoided his father's friends, preferring to think of himself as a college man, pleasantly divorced from the family fold.

Where studies were concerned, he most certainly did not overtax himself. At the end of his freshman year Wendell Holmes stood twenty-second in a class of ninety-five. He was having a good time, and a good time was important. He was becoming acquainted with the world about him. He did not pick his friends for their intellectual brilliance. Well down in the second half of the class stood a boy from Philadelphia named Norwood Pearose Hallowell — a tall, brown-haired, good-natured boy whom Wendell liked at sight. Hallowell's younger brother appeared in the autumn of '58, a freshman; when Norwood addressed him as "thee," Wendell was enchanted. Wendell's cousin, John Morse, was a year ahead but the two saw much of each other. Then there was Henry Bowditch who had gone to school at Dixwell's. Henry worked hard; he was headed for Medical School.

Lodging at Mr. Danforth's, Wendell was not subject to quite as strict rules as the boys in the dormitory — but he was subject to almost the same discomforts. His room, bleak and uncarpeted, was nearly filled with a large feather bed and warmed only by the open fire. The dormitory boys heated a cannon ball on extra-cold days and placed it over the fire in a skillet. It gave out a pleasant round red glow. As soon as the weather got warm, it was

highly rewarding to roll the cannon ball downstairs; it made the proctors angry and the noise was superb. A large part of every student's time was spent trying to keep warm. Ben Crowninshield stuffed lampwicks in his keyhole to keep out the draft, and poured water round his window frames. Ice makes excellent insulation. He caught colds and the colds hung on. "Awful hard time," the boy once wrote in his diary after he had sent for the leech woman. "Fainted — bled like a pig."

It upset Dr. Holmes that the boys at college did not show more interest in athletics. As usual when he felt strongly about something, he said so in the public prints. At the moment he had a superb vehicle in "The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table." "Such a set of black-coated, stiff-jointed, soft-muscled, paste-complexioned youth," he wrote, "as we can boast in our Atlantic cities never before sprang from loins of Anglo-Saxon lineage. . . . We have a few good boatmen, — no good horsemen that I hear of, — I cannot speak for cricketers — but as for any great athletic feat performed by a gentleman in these latitudes, society would drop a man who should run round the Common in five minutes."

A few good boatmen? Wendell Holmes was challenged furiously in his father's name. Yet what the doctor wrote was essentially true. Collegiate sport was an individual matter. You went out and ran to "get up a good sweat." If you were interested in developing your physique you "dumb-belled" in between classes. Or you went over to the Tremont Gymnasium in Boston and lifted weights or worked on the horizontal bar under the "professor's" direction — often straining yourself for life in the process.

Wendell Holmes would have none of it. What he liked in the way of exercise was an hour's skating on Fresh Pond with plenty of beer and oysters afterward with his friends. Sometimes on Saturdays he started out with Henry Bowditch, Hallowell, and John Morse, and walked to Boston along frozen rutted roads, or through the snow around by Mount Auburn, Watertown, Newton, Brighton, and Cambridge Crossing. Some of the more sportive spirits went down to the pit on Federal Street to watch Grip John's dogs kill rats, thence to Parker's for an evening of drinking, thence to Cambridge in a hired sleigh, hurling snowballs at the new gas globes on the way.

If Wendell Holmes was with these uproarious spirits, on the Faculty Books his name does not appear for "private admonishing." He was by nature convivial, a member of the Hasty Pudding Club and of the Porcellian like his father before him. But Wendell was essentially independent. He did as he pleased, exercised when he pleased, or went without exercise if he happened to prefer a stroll up to Garden Street for tea with the Dixwells or across the Square to talk to Uncle John. Most certainly he did not embrace exercise because the Autocrat recommended it.

Mr. Lowell stopped Wendell on Kirkland Street to tell him in high glee that the Germans were going to publish the "Autocrat" under the grandiose and humorless title of *Der Tisch-Despot*. In France, where the family breakfast table was a thing unknown, the whole affair was a mystery. "L'Autocrate à la table du déjeuner!" exclaimed a French reviewer. "Titre bizarre!"

The more famous the "Autocrat" became, the more Wendell distrusted his father in this new guise of town prophet and interpreter. There was no telling what he would expose next. Wendell was afraid to talk at home, to tell about the class dinner, the club elections. Were all writers so conscienceless? Everything, everything was grist to the Autocrat's mill. Wendell suffered agonies concerning this indecent lack of privacy. He went gloomily to Uncle John Holmes. "Father loves it," he said. "At home last Sunday he showed me a whole desk full of letters from admirers. The rumor is that Father not only named the *Atlantic* but he made it with this Autocrat. Father says the Autocrat is unburdening him of what he was born to say."

Uncle John grinned. His private opinion was that it would take more than one "Autocrat" to do that. "Don't take it so hard, Wendell," he said. "You will get used to your father. I did, long ago."

Wendell was grateful. How well Uncle John understood the feelings of a college man! No sooner was the "Autocrat" in print than Dr. Holmes commenced a novel for serialization in the *Atlantic*. At home on Sundays Wendell heard of nothing else. It was about a girl named Elsie Venner whose mother had been bitten by a snake just before Elsie's birthday. Elsie was born with the mark of the beast upon her. Studying the habits of reptiles so as to make Elsie more deadly as well as more beautiful, Dr. Holmes procured a long, very active garter snake and kept it in a cage in his study. He got a stuffed rattlesnake too, and hung it over his books. The parlous worm, he called it. The pizen serpent.

"Father is nothing if not thorough," Wendell told his Uncle John one evening, staring grimly into the fire.

Uncle John laughed. "I was actually asked for my autograph the other night, Wendell," he said. "It was at the party for Père Hyacinthe. Hyacinthe's little boy was collecting signatures. I heard him ask who I was, and then he pushed a piece of paper in my hand and I signed it."

Uncle John paused, pulling at his cigar. It was a large cigar and smelled awful. Uncle John always smoked five-cent cigars so that his taste would not become too refined. He said he hated people whose taste was too refined.

Wendell waited. Uncle John's pauses were enough to kill a person from curiosity. Signed the paper — what could he possibly have signed it but "John Holmes"?

"Well?" Wendell said.

"I signed it —" Uncle John said slowly, "I signed it, 'John Holmes, frère de mon frère.'"

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DECEMBER, 1858. Wendell Holmes was a sophomore at Harvard. The panic of '57 was almost forgotten; at evening parties, people served wine and meat again instead of hot chocolate and crackers. But at Pittsfield the Holmes house was gone — sold in the hard times when the Wendell stocks yielded no profit.

Around Montgomery Place, houses were going up;

shops were creeping onto Tremont Street. Dr. Holmes decided to take his family across the Common to the new part of town that had lately been filled in from the Back Bay swamp. He rented a house on the river side of Charles Street. The back rooms had a beautiful view across the water to the northern hills. Wendell's room was on the third floor. As a sophomore, Wendell was no longer permitted every week-end at home, but he came for the six weeks' vacation after Christmas.

Climbing the stairs late one January afternoon, Wendell wished the house were even higher. His father was practicing the violin downstairs in the little room to the left of the front door. Last summer at Nahant the doctor had been suddenly seized with a desire to play the fiddle. Learning the violin was a mere matter of application, he said cheerfully. Application and persistence. He had persisted — and the result was dreadful.

Wendell flung his hat on the rack by the door. Cigar smoke drifted down from the upstairs sitting room. Wendell took the stairs two at a time. Uncle John was sitting in the big leather chair by the fire, his head in his hands, his whole attitude one of extreme dejection. Wendell roared with laughter. "Uncle John," he said, groping in his pockets for his tobacco pouch, "do people often burst into musicality at fifty?"

John Holmes shook his head. "It's not music. It's manual dexterity. Don't you remember the stereoscope at Pittsfield? Before that it was the microscope, and before that it was whittling with a penknife."

"But the stereoscope didn't make a noise," Wendell said.

Uncle John sighed. "At Agassiz's the other night they asked me if it was true, about your father playing the violin. I said, 'Unfortunately, yes. My brother has often fiddled me out of the house. Like Orpheus harping Eurydice out of the infernal regions.'"

Wendell grinned and was silent. Once he had asked Uncle John whether his father did all these things for fun or for self-improvement and Uncle John had replied with a whole lecture on the New England mind. Grandfather Abiel Holmes, it seems, had raised his boys to believe in the Devil. Then things changed around New England, and the Devil disappeared. People were lost without the Devil to fight. So they stood on platforms, like Cousin Wendell Phillips, and denounced slavery. Or they frequented hospitals and fought puerperal fever.

From downstairs the fiddle screeched like a thing in pain. It was a battle, plainly, between Dr. Holmes and the violin. Plainly, also, the doctor was losing. Wendell took a long pull on his pipe. "But you, Uncle John," he said. "You aren't always striving and sweating after something you can't have."

John Holmes leaned toward the fire, rubbing his bad knee. "Striving?" he said. "Me? Why no, Wendy. I gave up the law twenty years ago. I just stay round and look after your grandmother over in the Gambrel-roofed House. I like it that way."

He smiled up at the long figure slouching by the fire. "You have to know the answers to things, don't you, Wendell?"

By the end of his sophomore year at Harvard, Wendell Holmes had fallen from twenty-second in his class to thirtieth. The indefatigable James Kent Stone, grandson of the great New York Chancellor, was first. Henry Bowditch was eighth. Dr. Holmes grumbled to his wife. "Thirtieth! What kind of position in the class is that?"

Amelia Holmes shook her head. "The boy is just eighteen. He's thin as a fence rail. I measured him yesterday on the pantry wall. Six feet three and a little over. I don't believe he has his growth even yet. It takes energy to grow."

Dr. Holmes, observing his own five feet three in the mirror over the bureau, remarked that that was something he didn't know much about. But the boy seemed so lazy. Spent hours mooning on the window seat in the library, with a book in his hand. It wasn't as if he hadn't a good brain, either, and a kind of natural aptitude for books. He wanted application, that was all.

Amelia, sitting in the bedroom rocker darning a sock, remarked to herself that her husband was growing more like his father every day. The things he expected from the boys! Neddy was half dead trying to be first in his class at Dixwell's. It was a good thing, perhaps, that Wendell didn't seem to hear half of what his father said to him. One night long ago, when she and Oliver Holmes were engaged, Oliver's father had given him a long lecture about something, she had forgotten what. Oliver, furious, had burst into the house on Bedford Place complaining that fathers ought not to let themselves become too steeped in virtue.

Amelia reminded her husband of it now. Dr. Holmes laughed. "Did I say that, 'Melia?" He looked pleased. "*Too steeped in virtue!* Graphic kind of phrase. I must have said it. Not at all the phrase a woman would invent."

Amelia Holmes went on with her darning. A sigh escaped her. Were all men so in love with the word and the sound of the word? One quoted phrase of his own, and already her husband had forgotten everything she had said about his sons. Things she had been planning to say for months, and had waited for the right moment. On the landing outside, the big clock struck six. Tea time. Amelia rose. It would be useless to pursue the subject. Something was wrong between father and son, and nothing she said could right it.

(To be continued)

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